

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

Daily Meditations



APRIL 2024



These meditations are available online
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*Partners in Hope Recovery Society
is a Christian community
outreach organization
offering hope, support, and healing
through Jesus Christ
to victims of
harmful circumstances and dependencies,
as they reclaim the gift of their life.*

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JUST FOR TODAY

Just for today I will try to live in conscious contact with God praying only for knowledge of His will and the power to carry it out.

Just for today I will strengthen my mind. I will take a few minutes to read and meditate on God's word, seeking God's perspective for my life today. I will take note of one helpful thing God is saying to me and seek to behave accordingly.

Just for today I will be joyful, optimistic, and grateful. I will take time to notice the gifts in me, in others, and in my surroundings and let the rest go.

Just for today I will adjust myself to what is and not try to adjust everything else to my desires. I will trust that God is working all things for good in my life.

Just for today I will be agreeable. I will not criticize, not find fault, and not try to improve or control anybody except myself. I will pray blessing on one person with whom I struggle to relate.

Just for today I will have a quiet half hour all by myself to relax and enjoy all that God is giving me.

Just for today I will be unafraid, believing that as I trust in God with all my heart and lean not on my own understanding, He will lead me along a good path.

Just for today I will seek to serve others with kindness, doing what is right, and walking humbly with God.

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago. Ephesians 2:10 NLT

SOME AREAS OF ADDICTION AND DEPENDENCY

For a variety of reasons, many of us have an underlying structure of disorder that is damaging us and others. We invite God to show us the truth about ourselves so we can personally receive God's forgiveness to set us free and healing to make us strong.



<p>SUBSTANCE ADDICTIONS:</p> <p>Alcohol Caffeine Injected or smoked substances such as: Crack, Crystal Meth, Heroin Marijuana Prescription Medications Sugar Tobacco</p>	<p>BEHAVIOUR ADDICTIONS:</p> <p>Anger/Rage/Bullying Cutting Crime Eating Disorders: Bulimia, Anorexia, Binging, Obesity Gambling Hoarding Sex/Pornography Verbal Abuse: Gossip, Lying, Accusing Blaming, Condemning Violence (physical, verbal, cyber)</p>
<p>SOFT ADDICTIONS:</p> <p>Digital Use: (Time or Content) TV/Phone/Tablet; video games, Social Networking; Cyber-bullying; Online shopping; Gambling, Pornography Exercise Food (See Eating Disorders) Isolating/Sleep Money: Debt/Fraud Religion Shopping Sports Work/Achievement</p>	<p>RELATIONSHIP ADDICTIONS:</p> <p>Abusive Relationships: Includes: Intimidation, Isolation, Domination, Blaming, Humiliation, Withholding, Forcing acts against one's will Approval dependency Attention Seeking Codependence/Rescuing Power/Control</p>

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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PHOTOS

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PRAYER: FOR HEALING AND RESTORATION

Loving God, Thank You for rescuing us from the dark power of Satan and bringing us into loving relationship with Your Son, Jesus. We ask for wisdom and understanding from Your Spirit in order to live as people who honour You. Heal us. Make us new. Make us strong followers of Christ. Root us deeply in Your love. We place our trust in Your power that can do far more in us than we dare ask or imagine. Amen.

How To Enjoy New Life With God In Recovery

God created us to have a wonderful life. In love, God planned for us and carefully put us together. God has always been calling out to us to enter into a relationship of love with Him. He doesn't force us but He invites us. Many of us have learned what a painful and confusing wreck our lives become when we try to live independently from God. Today is a good day to begin to live the full and rich life God intended for us. Nothing in our past can keep us from this life, if we want it and choose for it.

The 12-Steps remind us that our lives are unmanageable without the loving care of God and that we can get to know and come to believe that He is a power greater than ourselves. As we turn our will and our lives over to God's care, we find a solid foundation upon which to build a new life.

When we confess our sin and brokenness to God, repent and turn towards God, He gives us new life. When we invite God to come into our lives we find that He is ready and waiting for us. A simple Prayer: like the following, offered sincerely, establishes this new relationship with God that will last forever.

God, my life is unmanageable without you. You created me to live in relationship with you. There really is no good way to live on my own. Forgive me for not including you. I turn from my independent ways and surrender my will and my life to you. Thank you Jesus for dying on the cross for my sins and making a way for me to have new life and be filled up with Your Holy Spirit. Come into my heart and wash me clean. Teach me to do your will. Transform my way of thinking. Strengthen me to obey You in all I do. Amen

If you prayed that Prayer: sincerely from your heart, God forgives you and receives you. God makes you His son or daughter. God wants to show you how to live well and give you strength to do that every day. We would love to provide you with some information to support you as you move forward in your journey with God. Please contact us. You'll find our contact information on the front cover of this booklet.

I AM LOVED BY GOD ALWAYS

We all long to experience love from our family, friends, and the people we respect. Some of us think that we need to behave in a certain way or become a certain type of person, so we can earn love from others. We are sure that when others love us we will feel happy and contented.

God's love for us is quite different from what we think. It is not influenced by certain things we do for Him because God's love is based on who He is, which is love. There is something constant and safe in God's love. It is a love that will never fail us.

This is real love. It is not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. We are still alive because the Lord's faithful love never ends. Every morning he shows it in new ways! You are so very true and loyal! I say to myself, "The Lord is my God, and I trust him." (1 John 4:10 NLT, Lamentations 3:22-24 ERV)

We never have to worry if we are good enough for God. While God may not approve of some of our actions, His love is not an emotion that will change with circumstances that we create. He loves us when we are at our worst. His love is constant. When God looks at us, He sees us through His eyes of love. If we believe in the finished work of Jesus, repent of our sins, and allow God to work in our lives, God sees us as we will become.

The real question for us to ask ourselves is not whether God loves us or not but whether we have opened our hearts to God and invited Him into our life. If we choose to give our will and life over to the care of God we can experience God's love and grow strong in it each day. Where we once felt dead inside because of sin, God's Holy Spirit now brings us to life. When God lives in us, His love comes alive in our hearts. We then have the full assurance that absolutely nothing can separate us from God's love.

... nothing now, nothing in the future, no powers, nothing above us or nothing below us—nothing in the whole created world—will ever be able to separate us from the love God has shown us in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:39 ERV)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, Thank You that You paid my sin debt in full. Come into my heart. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit and Your love which You have promised will never fail me. Amen

***When
God lives
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love
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APRIL 2

MAINTAINING HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

NOTES

When we turned our will and life over to God many of us had hope for a quick turnaround in our lives. We failed to remember how many years it took us to get to where we are in our lives today. Some of us gave up hope of recovery when we found ourselves struggling with life minus our dependency. For this reason we must be aware that hope grows gradually as we wholeheartedly practice surrender of our will to the care of God, and commit to obeying His principles in all our affairs.

Everything written in the past was written to teach us. The Scriptures give us strength to go on. They encourage us and give us hope. (Romans 15:4 NIRV)

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Our thought process was previously programmed by our self-focused thinking and now needs to be reprogrammed so it is in line with what the Bible teaches. To reprogram our minds, we need to acknowledge and repent of our incorrect thinking, ask God to help us believe in our hearts, and fill our minds with the knowledge of His Word that gives us the power to carry it out.

We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience. (Colossians 1:9b-11 NIV)

God has promised to help us and give us direction in the way we are to go. Laying down our will in favour of God's will for our lives is the way to a meaningful, purposeful life. Maintaining our hope of change and being patient with ourselves is what will work in the long run. With God in our lives there really is hope for the future.

Don't live the way this world lives. Let your way of thinking be completely changed. Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. (Romans 12:2a NIRV)

Prayer: Gracious God, Thank You for giving me hope and a future. I choose to surrender my will to You and ask that You change my way of thinking and behaving. Amen

COMING BACK

In the Bible, we read of a story Jesus told about a father and two sons. (Luke 15:11-31) The younger of the two boys became dissatisfied with life in his father's household and believed life away from home was more desirable. He asked for his inheritance, before it was due to him, and then went out and squandered all he had on wild living. While he had money, he had friends, but when his money ran out, he found himself alone.

Often when we come into recovery, we find ourselves where the prodigal son was, alone and worn out by sin, with a life that is unmanageable.

Often when we come into recovery, we find ourselves where the prodigal son was, alone and worn out by sin, with a life that is unmanageable.

God offers us a purposeful life, but we think that God's ways are restrictive rather than protective and want to live life in the way we choose. We want to have fun without considering the consequences of the choices we make. As long as we maintain that perspective, the sad truth is, we will end up broken and needy.

Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance. Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live. (Isaiah 55:2-3 NKJV)

The father of this boy continued to wait for the return of his son and one day he saw him coming towards home and ran to meet him. God is always pursuing us with His love, and when we turn away

from our self-willed ways and come to Him, He welcomes us with open arms and gives us the privilege of being called His precious child.

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! (1 John 3:1 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Forgive me for the times I have rejected You in favour of my own self-centeredness. I ask for Your forgiveness. Thank You for adopting me as Your precious child. Help me to follow Your ways in all my affairs. Amen

HIDING BEHIND THE LIES

We started lying a long time ago to cover up and hide from the truth. Now we find it almost impossible to tell the complete truth in any situation. We often feel like running and hiding from others, rather than telling them the truth. However, the road to recovery which God offers us is based on truth telling and integrity. What are we going to do?

Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but whoever takes crooked paths will be found out. (Proverbs 10:9 NIV)

We all know that we have been dishonest but are we willing to admit to ourselves the truth about why we lied? Some of our core beliefs are lies that keep us in sin and addiction. For those of us who have cycled in and out of recovery, it's almost certain we have been living under the power of deception and require God's help to recognize our error, so that we can begin to live in truth. It's time to start acknowledging the underlying lies that our beliefs are based on. To leave them untouched will impact our recovery and contribute to future relapse.

Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth." (John 8:31b-32 NIV, John 16:13 NLT)

How willing are we to make a fresh start and finally be free from the deceit that keeps us lying in our thoughts, speaking lies out of our mouths, and implementing lies with our actions? God desires that we know the truth and that we recognize and reject our untruthful ways. Are we willing to learn about truth and follow truth in all our affairs?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I confess that I have found it more self-serving to lie and act on my own faulty beliefs rather than to be guided by the truth of Your Word. I've lied to myself and to others. Today, I confess that I have been wrong. I turn away from telling lies and ask You to forgive me. Please work in me and change me so that telling the truth, regardless of any consequences, becomes my way of life. Amen

Are we willing to learn about truth and follow truth in all our affairs?

Emotions, stress, troubles in a relationship, illness, or just talking about the past can trigger an obsession in us to relapse. Something good happening and a desire to celebrate can also be a trigger. Many of us have learned to be alert to the feelings that make up the acronym “HALT” (hungry, angry, lonely, tired) as situations that put us at risk for relapse.

Through Christ we feel sure before God. I don't mean that we are able to do anything good ourselves. It is God who makes us able to do all that we do. The Lord is the only one who can save us. Only he can make us strong. (2 Corinthians 3:4-5 ERV, Isaiah 45:24 NIRV)

Learning how to recognize what triggers us, and developing ways to manage the cravings that result, is an important part of living well in recovery today.

It is not wise to face triggers and obsessions on our own and hope to overcome them. God wants us to be successful in recovery and, if we just ask, He will provide what is needed in each moment of every day. Maintaining open communication with God on a regular basis makes it easy for us to call out to Him when the triggers strike.

The ability to identify our recurring triggers will help us make plans for any future crisis. When a trigger happens, we are then prepared to handle the situation. Some folks choose to memorize one of God's promises and speak it to themselves as often as necessary until the crisis passes. Others will have people they can call for help when they are in trouble. The problem is that we often wait to contact those who can help until the thought patterns swirling in our heads change.

God is faithful. He will not let you be tempted any more than you can take. But when you are tempted,

God will give you a way out. Then you will be able to deal with it. (1 Corinthians 10:13 NIRV)

Learning how to recognize what triggers us and developing ways to manage the cravings that result is an important part of living well in recovery today .

Prayer: Thank you God that I don't have to face anything alone for You are always with me. Together with you any difficulty can be worked out and overcome. Amen

CAN JESUS BE TRUSTED AS A HIGHER POWER?

The Bible is a wonderful source of support for us and tells us of many situations where Jesus showed compassion to those He encountered. As we turn to Jesus, we can be sure that He will exhibit the same kindness and support to us.

One day a man came to Jesus and asked him to help his young son. He said to Jesus, ***“Have mercy on us and help us, if you can.” “What do you mean, ‘if I can’?” Jesus asked. “Anything is possible if a person believes.” The father instantly cried out, “I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!”*** (Mark 9:22b-24 NLT)

When we face our powerlessness and the unmanageability of our lives, we can begin the process of recovery by asking Jesus to help us have faith in Him, just like the man did who needed help for his son. Jesus set the son free and restored him to his father. God awaits an invitation from us to restore the loving relationship with Him that He planned for us from the beginning of time.

Recovery and eternal life will be ours when we renounce our rebellion and believe in the one God sent to save us. The one God sent was His beloved son Jesus. We can know what God is like by getting to know Jesus and learning from Him and from His teachings.

Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?” Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.” (John 6:28-29 NIV)

As we begin to trust in Jesus and His unfailing love for us, we will come to realize how God truly meant life to be lived.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I am powerless over my dependency and my life is unmanageable. I come to You and ask for Your help to believe that a Power greater than myself could restore me to sanity and new life. Just like the father of the boy I pray, “I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!” Amen

As we begin to trust in Jesus and His unfailing love for us, we will come to realize how God truly meant life to be lived.

CHARACTER DEFECT – NOT FOLLOWING THROUGH

In “How It Works” we read and hear the words read regularly in meetings: *“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.”* (Big Book of A.A. page 58). Anyone who has made an honest attempt at recovery knows the hard work that is involved. What gives us encouragement and hope is the fact that many people succeed when they thoroughly do the work.

For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope. (Romans 15:4 NIV)

***Rarely
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***Big Book page
58***

Clearing the wreckage of our past and rebuilding our character and our relationships isn’t accomplished in a day. We contribute to that goal each day, but effort over time is what is required to meet our long-term objective.

As we come to believe that God is a Power greater than ourselves who can restore us to sanity, we can know certain things, and even decide to turn our will and life over to God’s care. But, the real test of our desire for recovery is the follow-through of putting God’s Word as recorded in the Bible and the steps into practice each day. Some days will be relatively easy and other days it will require every bit of strength and commitment we can muster.

Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble and keep on praying. So let’s not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don’t give up. (Romans 12:12, Galatians 6:9 NLT)

Who of us enjoys doing a searching, fearless, and moral inventory and then admitting the exact nature of our wrongs? It’s painful to come to God and ask for the removal of our character defects. Making a list of those we have harmed and making amends to them is threatening for most of us. However, God’s promise, and the experience strength and hope of those who have gone before us, tells us that, as we follow the path and do things one step at a time, God will get us to our goal.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I often want the “quick fix” and find it hard to follow through on the challenging parts of becoming the person You created me to be. Help me to fix my eyes on You, and on recovery, and please strengthen me to do the work required of me each day. Amen

FACING TODAY WITH COURAGE

It takes courage to live in recovery. Admitting that our lives were unmanageable and that we were powerless to sort ourselves out took real courage. Asking for help also required courage as we turned our will and life over to the care of God.

Be strong! Be fearless! Don’t be afraid and don’t be scared by your enemies, because the Lord your God is the one who marches with you. He won’t let you down, and he won’t abandon you. (Deuteronomy 31:6 CEB)

When we know that our will and our lives are secure in God’s care we no longer need to fear confronting our problems. We can face each day without the mood-altering substances or habits that we thought we needed because we are never alone to cope with anything that comes our way. We can look at what it means to take responsibility for ourselves and stop blaming others for where we are at today. We can face feelings of weakness and insecurity no matter how many challenges are involved in sorting out our hearts and our circumstances. Do we feel like we can do this? Probably not!

Feeling strong is not essential to action. Knowing God is with us and promises us victory steadies us and gives us the courage to do the next right thing, even in our weakest moment. When we feel fear, guilt, or shame, we can immediately hand those reactions over to God who has promised us forgiveness and healing for all our woundedness. We can face and overcome anything, not on our own, but when God lives in us. The Big Book of AA reminds us: *We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.*

Through you [God] we push down our foes; through your name we tread down those who rise up against us. (Psalm 44:5 ESV)

Prayer: Loving God, Live in me today. Remind me in my weakest moment that You are with me and that You will never leave me. You are so much stronger than anything that comes against me. I stand with You today and trust You to stand with me. Amen

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CHARACTER STRENGTH – FAIR AND JUST

As we seek to live in recovery and face life's troubles and challenges, it's easy to become discouraged and feel sorry for ourselves when things appear not to be fair. We see others get housing, get an opportunity for education or a job that we wish we could have. It doesn't seem fair that the system won't give us what we need, when we need it. We think it's not fair when our family members won't trust us even though we tell them we've changed. (The fact that we may have cheated and stolen from them and lived for a long time in a destructive way, does not appear to come into our reckoning.) We complain that life is unfair. Where is God in the middle of all of this?

The Lord is good and does what is right. He shows sinners the right way to live. He teaches his ways to humble people. He leads them with fairness. (Psalm 25:8-9 ERV)

God is fair, and he will remember all the work you have done.

Hebrews 6:10 ERV

God has a good plan for our lives and is willing and able to put it into effect. His priority is that we would come to know Him and have His character developed in us. God knows that when we live in His way rather than in our own way, we will experience joy and satisfaction. At times that may mean not having as much money or as much independence as someone else because God is aware of certain character defects in us that need healing. God may allow us to stay in our current situation until we receive healing and are strong enough to live responsibly. Because of God's kindness and knowledge, He is keeping us from future harm. From our point of view, it seems unfair but from His viewpoint it is pure love and protection.

God is fair, and he will remember all the work you have done. He will remember that you showed your love to him by helping his people and that you continue to help them. (Hebrews 6:10 ERV)

When we trust God and seek to live for Him in whatever circumstances we find ourselves in today, God will surely make a way forward for us and we will thank Him for His wisdom and all He has done.

Prayer: Loving God, I dislike having problems and feel that sometimes life is unfair. Help me to keep my focus on You and what You promise rather than on what I want. Help me to simply do what is right and trust that as I go forward You are working all things together for my good. Amen

SWEET FRUIT OF PATIENCE

A famous philosopher (Aristotle) once said, "Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet." After many years in our dysfunctional lifestyle of seeking instant results, it's challenging to do the hard work of confronting our issues while establishing a relationship with the God who has known us before we were even born. Is the result truly worth the effort?

Don't you see how wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you? Does this mean nothing to you? Can't you see that his kindness is intended to turn you from your sin? (Romans 2:4 NLT)

In God's eyes we were people worthy to pursue and rescue from brokenness and sin. God's desire for us was that we would enter a new life with Him in recovery. God was patient with us until we called out to Him in our helpless state. When we were not even conscious of Him, God's eyes were on us watching to see when our hearts would turn toward Him. As God is patient with us, so we need to be patient with each other until we all come to unity in our faith in this amazing God.

But God had mercy on me so that Christ Jesus could use me as a prime example of his great patience with even the worst sinners. Then others will realize that they, too, can believe in him and receive eternal life. (1 Timothy 1:16 NLT)

As we change and practice the principle of patience in all we do, others will find hope that they too can change. Speaking of our experience, strength, and hope will nourish their hopes and give them encouragement as they build their own life with God.

There is no instant way to build patience in our lives. Patience is the fruit of the Holy Spirit at work in us, bringing us contentment and joy as we follow the ways of God. We will experience God's delight as we wholeheartedly follow Him, regardless of our circumstances. For those of us who have never known anyone to appreciate and affirm us, knowing that God is pleased with us is truly an amazing experience.

For God is pleased when, conscious of his will, you patiently endure unjust treatment. (1 Peter 2:19 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to be patient in all my ways, and in all my circumstances. Thank You for being patient with me as I struggled to believe in You. Amen

As God is patient with us, we need to be patient with each other until we all come to unity in our faith in this amazing God.

PURE IN HEART

When we come into a recovery program, one of our priorities has to be sorting life according to what is true. The truth is, we are sick and in need of healing. We are weak, sinful, and sometimes crazy. We need to be forgiven, cleansed, and enlightened by the truth of God's word. If we are to live from a pure heart, we need to let the Bible be our handbook and do what it says without any compromise.

Blessed are those whose hearts are pure. They will see God. Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path. (Matthew 5:8 NIRV, Psalm 119:105 NKJV)

If we are to live from a pure heart, we need to let the Bible be our handbook and do what it says without any compromise.

God sent His son Jesus into the world to take on human flesh. Jesus, who never sinned, died for our sin so that we might have a new life purified from sin by His blood. When we admit our sin, and accept what Jesus has done in our place, His Holy Spirit comes to live within us. He is the "Higher Power" who will give us the will and desire to live in a new way.

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Corinthians 5:21 NASB)

God's agenda needs to become our daily priority if we are to live our lives from a pure heart. We need to guard what we have been given. The evil one will prowl around seeking to turn our hearts away from God. Through prayer and meditation, we need to be in conscious contact with God, praying for the knowledge of His will for our life and the power to carry it out.

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7 NKJV)

Prayer: Loving God, I want my life to reflect my acceptance of the blood of Jesus to purify me from all sin. Help me to prioritize my relationship with You and to live my life guided by the principles contained in Your Word as recorded in the Bible. Amen

DYSFUNCTIONAL THINKING – VICTIM MENTALITY

In recovery, as well as in addiction, we can have a victim mentality. A person with a victim mentality tells their life story with the intent of making people feel sorry for them. Through a person's sympathy they begin to control and manipulate that person. Their intention is always to have others meet their needs. They do not take responsibility for their own behaviour because they believe someone else is always to blame for things that went wrong in their life.

Many are the victims she has brought down; her slain are a mighty throng. Her house is a highway to the grave, leading down to the chambers of death. (Proverbs 7:26-27 NIV)

God never intended that we would carry our own burdens or manipulate others to carry them for us. No human person is equipped to handle the emotional and physical abuse of their own sin, never mind that of another. God saw the trouble that sin brought on all humankind and He had a plan to deal with it. Because of God's great love for us, Jesus willingly came to fulfill God's plan of redemption for all mankind.

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. (Isaiah 53:4-5 NKJV)

There is no need for any of us to be either a victim or a saviour. Jesus is the only one who can set us free from the disease of sin. If we have a victim mentality or are trying to be a saviour for someone who has, we need to come to Jesus and allow Him to heal us and bring us peace.

Let us throw off any sin that holds on to us so tightly. And let us keep on running the race marked out for us. Let us keep looking to Jesus. He is the one who started this journey of faith. (Hebrews 12 1b-2a NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to draw near to You for You alone can break the chains of bondage to sin that so easily entangle me. I want to receive all that You offer me through Jesus. Please set me free to run the race that You have marked out for me. Amen

If we have a victim mentality or are trying to be a saviour for someone who has, we need to come to Jesus and allow Him to heal us and bring us peace.

HUMILITY

A humble person is grounded in a realistic view of who they are. They do not feel inferior to others but are overwhelmed by the undeserved goodness of God. If we truly believe that God cares we no longer need to hide behind too much self-confidence or the burden of self-doubt. Our security is in the safety of God's unfailing love and acceptance of who we truly are.

Investigate my life, O God, find out everything about me; Cross-examine and test me, get a clear picture of what I'm about; See for yourself whether I've done anything wrong— then guide me on the road to eternal life. (Psalm 139:23-24 MSG)

Humility comes quietly to those who draw close to the Lord, trust in His goodness, and express those qualities in their behaviour.

An attitude of humility allows us to accept our dependence on God and follow His directions. With humility of heart, we listen to God's warning signals and turn away from any familiar path that is harmful. Humility permits us to follow an unfamiliar path with our hand in the hand of God. Humility allows us to lay down everything that hinders our way forward. In humility we embrace God's principles because we believe they will ultimately produce fullness of life.

My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words. Don't lose sight of them. Let them penetrate deep into your heart, for they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body. Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life. (Proverbs 4:20-23 NLT)

Humility comes quietly to those who draw close to the Lord, trust in His goodness, and express those qualities in their behaviour. The God of time and eternity, who created us in love, is always near to us and invites us to come close to His heart. With confidence, we can say, "God, here I am, I humbly ask you to remove all my shortcomings so I can relax in your presence now and always." There, with Him, we can finally live as people of integrity and peace.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank you for being with me when I grieve over the occurrences of my past. I am thankful that I do not have to face this sorrow alone. Today, I humbly ask you to remove all my shortcomings. Please hold me close to Your heart and keep me in perfect peace. Amen

GRATITUDE AT EVERY STAGE OF THE JOURNEY

When sharing our recovery journey at meetings we often reflect on what life was like in addiction, what happened, and what life looks like now. In each stage of our recovery it is good to acknowledge God's input into what has gone on and thank Him for all that He has done.

Thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:57 NLT)

Only God could have brought us to a place where we recognized that we were powerless and that our lives had become unmanageable. God, in His wisdom, brought someone across our path to share a message of hope with us, or He simply stirred a desire in us for something better than what we were living. God gave us the strength and courage to seek help and a new way of life. One day at a time, one moment at a time, God gives us sobriety and a life worth living. Have we taken time today to thank God for all of this?

But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. Everything you say and everything you do should be done for Jesus your Lord. And in all you do, give thanks to God the Father through Jesus. (Romans 6:17 NIV, Colossians 3:17 ERV)

There's no doubt that the power of our addiction brought us to a place of being a slave to our drug of choice and to a lifestyle of doing whatever met our needs. We were set free from the bondage we were in by the power of God as we put our trust in the forgiveness and healing that Jesus achieved for us on the cross.

As we studied God's word and put His principles into practice in all our affairs, we found the freedom to speak and behave in ways that we never thought possible. Now we have a heart filled with gratitude for God's input into our lives and are willing to share our experience, strength, and hope with others.

Prayer: Loving God, I can't begin to tell you how grateful I am for what You have done for me. Each breath I take is a gift from You. I don't want to take my sobriety for granted. Today, and every day, I want to thank You for my recovery and the life I now have. Amen

It does us good to acknowledge God's input into what has gone on and thank Him for all that He has done.

PRACTICING DISCRETION

In the Big Book of AA, we are advised to use discretion in knowing how much time and attention to give to any one person or situation. Employers are encouraged to use discretion in how they approach those employees they want to help, even in mentioning the Big Book. We are cautioned to use discretion when making our Step 9 amends to people, and to do so only when it would not further injure them or others.

To show discretion is to know the right thing to do in a situation and behave in such a way that we don't cause offense. Quite the challenge. Thankfully, the Bible is very clear about how we can gain wisdom and practice discretion.

Discretion is a life-giving fountain to those who possess it, but discipline is wasted on fools.

Proverbs 16:22 NLT

For the Lord grants wisdom! From his mouth come knowledge and understanding. He grants a treasure of common sense to the honest. He is a shield to those who walk with integrity. He guards the paths of the just and protects those who are faithful to him. Then you will understand what is right, just, and fair, and you will find the right way to go. For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will fill you with joy. Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you. (Proverbs 2:6-10 NLT, Proverbs 2:11 NIV)

We know that on our own we are powerless to maintain healthy boundaries, think before we speak, and to know what's best in complicated situations. God's promise is that He will give us common sense, will protect us, will show us the way that is just and fair, and will even fill us with joy as we walk this journey.

We get wisdom and discretion by improving our conscious contact with God through prayer and meditation, and by practicing His principles in all our affairs. We learn by journeying with God, obeying what He says works, and then benefiting from the lessons we learn as we see the results. Discretion doesn't come in a moment. It comes from prayer, experience, integrity, and surrender to God's will.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to practice wisdom and discretion in all my affairs. Help me to display knowledge of Your ways in each situation I encounter today. When I should be silent, help me to not speak. Where I need to practice healthy boundaries, help me to do so. Help me to put into effect the lessons You are teaching me as I walk with You each day. Amen

FIGHT OR FLIGHT

When we are faced with a recurring problem we often just want it to go away so we can be done with it. We may have disagreed with another person many times and each one stood their ground. It is at times like this that we may choose either to flee the situation, because we are weary and have no fight left in us, or lash out and fight with accusations, blame, and intimidation.

I said, "Oh, that I had the wings of a dove! I would fly away and be at rest. I would flee far away and stay in the desert; I would hurry to my place of shelter, far from the tempest and storm. (Psalm 55:6-8 NIV)

Strong arguments exist because each person is unwilling to see the situation from the other's point of view. In our addiction we thought we had the right to live as we pleased. Those who cared for us knew we were harming ourselves and tried to discuss how our actions were causing grief for them. To avoid being confronted with situations that we were at least partly responsible for, fight or flight seemed the only options.

I have stretched out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, according to their own thoughts. (Isaiah 65:2 NKJV)

In some instances, when we see the mess another is making, we should pray hard and say nothing. Choosing to go their own way may be the result of a rebellious spirit and until the person gets to a place of seeing the insanity of the situation we are truly wasting our breath. If we choose to fight the battle we need to do so in love and not accusation. We need to find a way to encourage the person to express what is going on inside them and then patiently work with them from that point of view. If we act in anger we will likely lose the battle.

For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:19 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, In any dispute, please help me to listen for Your wisdom and to understand how Your wonderful message of reconciliation can be applied. Amen

To avoid being confronted with situations that we were at least partly responsible for, fight or flight seemed the only options.

To live with wisdom in recovery requires humility. We need to acknowledge, “I don’t really know what is best for me but I’m willing to try new ways and learn from the experience of others.” God is the source of all wisdom and His principles for living can be found in the Bible. The wisdom we gain will be determined by whether we act on the instructions in God’s Word and the advice of a mentor or friend, or just choose to operate on our own.

The Lord is the source of wisdom; knowledge and understanding come from his mouth. If you listen to him, you will understand what is just and fair and how to do what is right. You will gain wisdom, and knowledge will bring you joy. (Proverbs 2:6, 9 ERV)

A solid life in recovery requires that we learn to think and act in new ways and develop a wise heart.

Wise people desire to put God’s principles into effect in every activity of their daily living plus follow the guidance of those who walk with God. We don’t need advice from people who sound like us and say things we want to hear. We need to listen to people who are not afraid to contradict our dysfunctional thinking and tell us the truth, even though it may be difficult for us to hear.

Become wise by walking with the wise; hang out with fools and watch your life fall to pieces. (Proverbs 13:20 ERV)

Familiar thoughts often roll around in our heads challenging the truth of what we are being taught. If we dwell on old thought patterns, we will soon find ourselves feeling discontented. A solid life in recovery requires that we learn to think and act in new ways and develop a wise heart.

Dear friend, take my advice; it will add years to your life.

I’m writing out clear directions to Wisdom Way, I’m drawing a map to Righteous Road. I don’t want you ending up in blind alleys, or wasting time making wrong turns. Hold tight to good advice; don’t relax your grip. Guard it well—your life is at stake! (Proverbs 4:10-13 MSG)

Prayer: Loving God, I ask You for wisdom to choose the right path forward for me. Help me to trust Your guidance in all my affairs and listen to people who live their lives based on the wisdom of Your Word as recorded in the Bible. Amen

Forgiving others is something we must take very seriously if we want to protect our sobriety. Just like those who have harmed us, we can never make up to others for all the wrongs we have done to them. Through the finished work of Jesus, God forgives us for our wrongs and no longer counts our sins against us. Operating out of this secure foundation, we have the grace and strength we need to support our efforts in seeking reconciliation with those who hurt us.

It would be impossible for us to risk taking the first step in forgiving someone who has harmed us had God not demonstrated the way. We failed to keep God’s commandments and yet He was willing to sacrifice His Son in payment for our sin. If we will simply admit that we have done wrong, turn away from it, and trust Jesus for forgiveness, He will gladly give us new life.

In Christ, God did not hold people guilty for their sins. And he gave us this message of peace to tell people. (2 Corinthians 5:19 ERV)

God didn’t wait for us to come to Him. He prepared in advance. He reached out to us with this wonderful gift when we didn’t dare approach Him. We can reflect on God’s way of reconciliation as we begin the work of restoring our troubled relationships.

Make allowance for each other’s faults and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. (Colossians 3:13 NLT)

Hanging on to a bitter grudge and seeking revenge only sickens our soul and damages those who are close to us. Bitterness is like a cancer that feeds on our insides and shows itself in outbursts of irritability, anger, and resentment. Who do I still need to forgive? Am I ready to invite God into the pain and the injustice and ask Him to show me a way to peace through forgiveness?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You have forgiven me for my many wrongs against others and even though it is difficult for me, I will work hard to forgive those who have harmed me and, just as You have forgiven me, I choose to forgive them. Heal me and give me the courage and strength to move forward into a life of blessing and peace which comes from obedience to Your Word. Amen

Forgiving others is something we must take very seriously if we want to protect our sobriety.

WHAT GOD DOES LASTS

At most recovery meetings there are lots of handshakes and hugs and "chips" or "fobs" to honour clean time. Once a year a person may take a cake to mark their sobriety date. Whether it is a "Just for Today" chip or a multiple year cake, we all long for lasting recovery. Those who have some solid clean time will often share their experience, strength, and hope with us, and we need to listen to what they have to say.

The founders of AA knew that one of the smartest things we could do was to attach ourselves to something that is strong and enduring, and so they put together a spiritual program that is focused on God. God created us, watches over us, and offers us forgiveness and a new life when we believe in Jesus.

I know that everything God does will last forever. Nothing can be added to it. And nothing can be taken from it. (Ecc 3:14 NIRV)

I don't mean that we are able to do anything good ourselves. It is God who makes us able to do all that we do. (2 Corinthians 3:5 ERV)

On our own, life quickly becomes messy and unmanageable. Receiving help from others is certainly a step in the right direction but the support is only as strong as the person from whom we seek it. King Solomon, who was the wisest man of his time, reminds us that what God brings about in our lives is what will last forever. How comforting is that!!

I know that everything God does will last forever. Nothing can be added to it. And nothing can be taken from it. God does that so people will have respect for him. (Ecclesiastes 3:14 NIRV)

Enduring recovery requires that we follow God's ways in all our affairs. Nothing added and nothing taken away is how we are told it works. How often do we choose to add a bit of self-will into the mix and then find ourselves in trouble?

Today, let's read God's word, seek the wisdom that the Holy Spirit wants to give us, and together with God build a lasting recovery.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want recovery that will last. I don't want to stumble around. I want to go forward together with You. Take my hand and lead me on the path that You know will give me the life and peace that my heart desires. Amen

CO-DEPENDENCY

Co-dependency is a relationship addiction. People who are co-dependent often form relationships that are one-sided, emotionally destructive, and often abusive. A co-dependent person bases their identity and personal value on who they perceive themselves to be within a relationship. They often relate with the other person in a way that is harmful to their own well-being.

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago. (Ephesians 2:10 NLT)

Contentment in life does not come from controlling or trying to please someone else, or from hoping that person will meet our needs so that we can feel secure. Another human being cannot love us enough or touch us deeply enough to satisfy the longing in our hearts. Only God can truly satisfy those longings. Each person has only a limited responsibility for another's happiness. We have our desires and dreams and we need to let others have theirs. We make our own mistakes and others make theirs. We need to forgive ourselves and others for past mistakes and determine what we have learned from the situation.

Fullness of life and real freedom from co-dependency can only be found when we are first rooted in a relationship with our Heavenly Father. God made us in His image, and we have great value in His sight. When we base our worth and identity around this truth, rather than on the opinions that others hold, we begin to experience peace, freedom, and security.

Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. (Ephesians 1:4-5 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I ask You to show me how to live in a way that honours You and others. Help me to love You with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength and to love others as myself. Fill me to overflowing with Your love and give me wisdom to seek You in all my ways. Amen

Fullness of life and real freedom from co-dependency can only be found when we are first rooted in a relationship with our Heavenly Father.

A POSITIVE APPROACH TO FEELING BORED

In early recovery our positive expectations for a life free from crippling dependencies is huge. We are excited about what the future may hold and say we are willing to do whatever it takes to get our life back on track. As the weeks go on our routine becomes dull, and we find ourselves less enthusiastic than we once were. We start feeling sorry for ourselves and easily get angry with others. The truth is we are bored. We feel challenged and vulnerable in our new routine and have begun to focus on the old familiar patterns of life in addiction.

We have all these great people around us as examples. Their lives tell us what faith means. So we, too, should run the race that is before us and never quit.

We should remove from our lives anything that would slow us down and the sin that so often makes us fall. (Hebrews 12:1 ERV)

It is a fair question to ask ourselves why we are impatient and bored with where life is at today.

It is a fair question to ask ourselves why we are impatient and bored with where life is at today. Are we seeking out people who can help us understand what is going on within us, or do we just complain and blame? Anything in life worth having requires time to accomplish. Perhaps we should alter our routine and spend time helping others while we wait for things to happen for us. Telling ourselves that we are bored and feeling depressed does not produce change. When nothing changes, then nothing changes!

Finally, my brothers and sisters, always think about what is true. Think about what is noble, right and pure. Think about what is lovely and worthy of respect. If anything is excellent or worthy of praise, think about those kinds of things. (Philippians 4:8 NIRV)

Boredom is brought about by lack of action. Perhaps we need to change our thought pattern and think about those things that are worthy of praise. Maybe we need to work on establishing conscious contact with God, praying for the knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out. Let's allow any boredom we experience to point us to deeper growth in our relationship with God and more positive action in our recovery.

Prayer: Loving Father, I admit that boredom is pushing me back into darkness and I need help to remove it from my life. Please help me to consider others and make wise decisions in the use of my time. My desire is to do those things that are pleasing to You. Amen

CHARACTER DEFECT – FEAR

Fear is a disturbing emotion which is triggered by the expectation that something unpleasant is about to happen. The threat may be real or imagined. We often cover up our fears because we do not want others to know what is going on in our lives. We put on a happy face or act in a bravado way to cover up the fear inside us.

Covering up our fears may have led some of us along the path to a dysfunctional lifestyle and into addiction. God wants us to bring all our anxieties and fears to Him, so that we can be free to live life to the full.

Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you. (1 Peter 5:7 NLT)

Fear keeps us from being fully honest about our feelings and prompts us to project false or only partially true images of who we truly are. Fear makes us deny, either consciously or unconsciously, that anything is wrong. "It's all good" is a sure sign that it is not. As we choose to believe that we are loved and treasured by God, we come to know and experience that God works all things together for our good. With God, fear can be overcome even when life is not all we desire it to be.

There is no fear in love. Instead, perfect love drives away fear. That's because fear has to do with being punished. The one who fears does not have perfect love. (1 John 4:18 NIRV)

We know we are moving forward in recovery when we focus on God's love and kindness and reject our negative forecast of life in the future. We just need to come before God and place ourselves in His tender care.

When we experience the unfailing love and care that God has for us, we will put our trust in Him and not fear anything.

Prayer: Gracious God, I confess that my fears have kept me in bondage to negativity. Please help me to daily affirm, I will not fear the future because God's goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life. Amen

When we experience the unfailing love and care that God has for us, we will put our trust in Him and not fear anything.

DESIRE TO CHANGE

Whether in Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous, Tradition three highlights that the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking alcohol or stop using narcotics.

Jesus tells us: **Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.** (Matthew 26:41 NIV, Philippians 2:13 NLT)

It is not difficult to dislike the suffering and upheaval we experience while using and/or drinking. However, it takes an act of God to change our desire to not drink or use again. It really is a miracle that God works in us so the obsession to pick up is removed. We are told that we can expect a “daily reprieve” as we maintain our life with God on a continual daily basis. We need God’s help to be sober today. We need our actions to reflect God’s principles so inner change will show in our desire to obey what He says.

**As we
experience
conscious
contact
with God,
He
faithfully
changes
our
desires.**

As we add one day of sobriety to another we will notice things change around us. Our relationships become more pleasant, and we are more at peace. We have success in some things we are doing, and confidence begins to grow in us. The blur in our minds begins to clear. We find ourselves laughing and enjoying simple pleasures. All these things added together strengthen our desire to not drink or use.

Underlying all of this is the fact that, as we experience conscious contact with God, He changes our desires. The more we do what God says works, the more we experience the peace of God and a sense of well-being deep in our soul. We truly can admit that our life with God in recovery is showing itself to be sweeter and more desirable than a life of drinking or using.

Find your delight in the Lord. Then he will give you everything your heart really wants. Live by the Holy Spirit’s power. Then you will not do what your desires controlled by sin want you to do. (Psalm 37:4, Galatians 5:16 NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please change me from the inside out. I want to enjoy Your blessings and ask that You strengthen me each day to follow Your ways so I may continue to experience that life with You is so much more desirable than a life of drinking or using. Amen

LIVING ONE DAY AT A TIME

A saying we often hear in unpredictable circumstances and in recovery circles is "live one day at a time." In many meetings someone will read "Just for Today" – a list of positive actions from which we may choose one to focus on each day. As we pray the full version of the Serenity Prayer, we quickly come to a line that says, "living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time." God's Word also encourages us to surrender our will and life into His care every day.

Trust in the Lord and do good. Then you will live safely in the land and prosper. Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you your heart’s desires. Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him, and he will help you. (Psalm 37:3-5 NLT)

To live one day at a time, it's essential that we continually come to God with a willingness and intention to surrender our will and life into His care. What does that mean? What does a life surrendered to God really look like? What steps can we take to surrender our willfulness and instead implement God’s will and ways in our daily lives? It is important each day, or when we become aware of our sins, that we admit them to God and receive God’s forgiveness, mercy, and fresh cleansing. We can then start fresh and once again have another opportunity to make God's priorities our priority.

More than anything else, put God’s work first and do what he wants. Then the other things will be yours as well. (Matthew 6:33 CEV)

Each day there is a possibility that we may say or do something that we cannot change. We need to come to terms with the limitations of our humanity and acknowledge that we are not perfect. We are human beings confined within the slice of time we call today.

God has promised to take care of all our todays. We simply need to live one day at a time under God’s guidance and care. If we do this, we are assured that God will work everything together for our good, and according to His plan for our lives.

Prayer: Loving God, Thank you for the gift of this day. I choose to make Your agenda my priority today. Help me to live one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time, trusting that You will make all things right as I surrender to Your will. Amen

**We are
human
beings
confined
within
the slice
of time
we call
today.**

CONFRONTING SELF-PITY

One of our natural responses to the pressure and challenges of daily life is to indulge in self-pity. Things may not be going our way in our time frame. A misunderstanding may occur, and harsh words are spoken. We assess that another person is having life easier than us. In these situations, and many others, we are quick to feel sorry for ourselves and sink into the mud of “poor me.”

The question is not, “How do we avoid feeling self-pity?” because all of us will have these feelings at times. What would be more helpful is to ask ourselves, “What can I do to overcome self-pity and quickly get back on track?”

Don't think of yourself more highly than you should. Be reasonable when you think about yourself. Keep in mind the faith God has given to each of you. (Romans 12:3b NIRV)

What can I do to overcome self-pity and quickly get back on track?

God wants us to live in the truth about Him, about ourselves, and about our circumstances. When self-pity arises our first response should be to bring ourselves to God and let Him comfort and care for us. Then, in the security of God's love, we can sort out if this is our super-sensitivity to issues that needs to settle down, a misunderstanding that needs to be respectfully talked about, or a problem that we need God and others to help us deal with.

My God will use his glorious riches to give you everything you need. He will do this through Christ Jesus. The Lord defends his people; he is kind to his servants. (Philippians 4:19, Psalm 135:14 ERV)

Self-pity is always harmful to our well-being. We need to acknowledge that God will defend us against any falsehood. Our part is to stand in the truth of the situation and not get dragged down by discouraging lies that foster self-pity. If we experience self-pity we can use it as a signal to reach out to God for help. We are assured that when we seek God and surrender to His will, He will make all things right.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, When I face a problem or hear criticism, help me to take a broader view of the situation and not allow myself to fall into self-pity. Help me to stand on the truth of who You say I am and seek a solution which will bring peace and joy to all concerned in the situation that I find troubling. Amen

SAFEGUARDING OUR NEW LIFE

When we repent of our sin and surrender our will and life over to the care of God, amazing things happen. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus we are born again to a new life. By believing in the finished work of Jesus we become co-inheritors with Him of the Kingdom of God and have a part to play in the plan of God for the community He has placed us in. When we receive Jesus into our lives, our lives are complete in Him.

Don't tell lies to each other; it was your old life with all its wickedness that did that sort of thing; now it is dead and gone. You are living a brand new kind of life that is continually learning more and more of what is right, and trying constantly to be more and more like Christ who created this new life within you. (Colossians 3:9-10 TLB)

Over the years of the Covid-19 pandemic, the lives of people throughout the world have changed dramatically. Each country tried to minimize any serious infection of their residents by putting laws and restrictions in place for their protection. There was a penalty to pay when people disobeyed these laws and restrictions.

God wants to protect His people from the stubborn infection of sin in their lives. In the Bible He tells us what is good for us and what will cause us harm. If we disobey God's laws, there is also a penalty to pay.

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6:23 TLB)

We need to pay attention to what God says in His Word. We need to put His laws in place so that we, and those around us, will be protected from the infection of sin. We have been made perfect in Jesus and need to guard our lives from anything that would infect us and cause us harm.

Give up your evil ways and start thinking pure thoughts. And be faithful to me! Do you really want to be put to death for your sins? (Ezekiel 18:31 CEV)

Prayer: Gracious God, Thank You for Jesus who, by His finished work, while here on earth, made me complete in You. Please let my faith in Jesus be expressed in my actions towards others. Amen

God wants to protect His people from the stubborn infection of sin in their lives.

JUST FOR TODAY – I WILL TRY TO LIVE IN CONSCIOUS CONTACT WITH GOD

Just for today I will try to live in conscious contact with God praying only for knowledge of His will and the power to carry it out.

Our lives matter to God. The details of our day are important to him. He wants to give us direction. He wants to support and protect us. God enjoys spending time with us and He is pleased when we spend time with Him. God enjoys it when we “chat it up” with Him. Until we realize how much God loves us and cares about the details of our lives, we won’t want to pray to Him. Until we sincerely believe that He has completely forgiven us, we will be ashamed to face God.

Pray diligently. Stay alert, with your eyes wide open in gratitude. Don’t forget to pray for us.

Colossians
4:2-3 MSG

Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always. This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. (1 Chronicles 16:11, 1 John 5:14 NIV)

To have a chat with God today:

- ☞ Find a place where you can be undisturbed and free from distractions.
- ☞ Tell God your thoughts and feelings.
- ☞ Listen carefully. God has something to say to you.
- ☞ Share your day with God as it progresses just as you would tell of your experiences with a good friend.
- ☞ Review your day with God. What went wrong? What went right? Ask for forgiveness and make amends where necessary.
- ☞ Ask for any needed healing.
- ☞ Ask God for knowledge of his will for you and the power to carry it out.

I call on you, my God, for you will answer me; turn your ear to me and hear my prayer. (Psalm 17:6 NIV)

No one understands and cares for us more than the God who made us. Only God has the wisdom to give us reliable direction as to how today will fit together with the past, the present, and the future He has planned for us.

Prayer: Loving God, I am so grateful that You care for me and are interested in the details of my life. Thank You for giving me the strength and courage to walk in Your ways as You reveal Your will to me. Amen

POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES

We all need hope. Today we are affirming the hope within us that what is impossible for us to do on our own becomes possible when we reach out for help to the power who is greater than ourselves.

And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him. (Hebrews 11:6 NLT)

The Bible tells us that the key to life is in the “higher power” we look to. The God of the Bible is all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-loving. He’s the one who created the world. He’s the God who planned for us to have a loving, caring relationship with Him, and with others. He’s the one who planned to forgive the sins of every human being before they were ever committed. Step Two of the 12-Step program of A.A. invites us to get to know this all-powerful God who is rich in mercy and love towards those who choose to believe His Word as recorded in the Bible.

We will be more eager to come to this Higher Power if we see Him as the God who proclaims, “**he rewards those who sincerely seek him**”. Our faith may not have matured to this point, but we can start by asking God to help us have more faith. When we choose to give our will and life over to God and repent of our sins, we are accepted into God’s family. Jesus already paid our sin debt in full and, as we faithfully follow God’s ways in all our affairs, we will become the person He created us to be.

“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.” (Hebrews 11:1 NLT)

Prayer: Dear God, I am not sure about who You are right now, but I am coming to believe that You are the Power greater than myself who will restore me to sanity. I believe You exist and trust that You will strengthen and help me as I move forward in my new life with You in recovery. Please help me to follow Your principles in all my affairs. Amen

It is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.
(Hebrews 11:6)

STOPPING GOSSIP

Almost everyone says they hate gossip and yet many of us are easily drawn into conversations that are unkind. How can we be a person who stops gossip rather than one who contributes to its spread?

But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language. Without wood a fire goes out; without a gossip a quarrel dies down. (Colossians 3:8 NLT, Proverbs 26:20 NIV)

How can we be a person who stops gossip rather than one who contributes to its spread?

We need to decide that we won't participate in a conversation about another person when the words that are being said would be painful for that person to hear. By simply not passing on any of the words and rumors we have heard, we can end gossip. If we are engaged in a conversation which moves towards gossip, we can change the subject and talk about something else – anything else that is positive.

We can make a point to counter negative things said about a person by expressing positive things about them. If we think it might help the situation, we can encourage a gossipier to speak with the person they are gossiping about. Sometimes if we simply say, "I don't feel comfortable talking about this person in this way" it may help the gossipier to reconsider what they are saying.

Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers. Drive out the mocker, and out goes strife; quarrels and insults are ended. (Psalm 1:1, Proverbs 22:10 NIV)

All of us need to ask ourselves: "When do I find myself engaging in gossip? How many of my words would pass the 3-question test for wise speech? 1) Is it true? 2) Is it kind? 3) Is it necessary?" It may be helpful for us to remember that those who gossip to us will gossip about us. Today, let's all make the effort to stop gossiping.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I ask Your forgiveness for the times I have found fault with others and gossiped about them. I am grateful for the compassion and mercy You showed to me when my own character defects were revealed. Help me to encourage others rather than judge and gossip about them. Amen

THERE BUT FOR THE GRACE OF GOD GO I

While watching the evening news, we often hear about a disaster caused by someone driving while drunk or high, or we might learn the next grim statistic in the crisis around the world due to opioid addiction. The following slogan has meaning for many of us who are alive and breathing and sober, "There but for the grace of God go I." At each meeting we attend we hear the following words read from "How It Works": *"Remember that we deal with alcohol – cunning, baffling, powerful! Without help it is too much for us. But there is One who has all power – that One is God. May you find Him now!"*

There are things we can and should do to maintain sobriety like being rigorously honest and faithfully working the steps. But these alone are not enough. We need the help of God that comes in the form of His amazing grace.

By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved. (1 Corinthians 15:10, Ephesians 2:4-5 ESV)

Grace is something freely given. We can't earn it and don't deserve it. Many of us are alive today simply by the grace of God. Some of us are finally walking in the light after being lifted by God from the darkness of despair and delusions caused by our painful traumas and poor choices. Living in freedom comes directly from the amazing grace of our loving God.

We can hardly imagine a God who is so good, so kind, and so generous that He would reach out to us in our brokenness and offer to make something beautiful of our lives. Yet God is doing that all the time and we are living clean and sober today as examples of His grace. Jesus took the penalty for our sin and brokenness on Himself when He died on the cross so we could be forgiven and healed. That's the grace exchange. That is God's generosity to you and I which we do not deserve, but which is graciously given because of Jesus.

Prayer: God of love and grace, Thank You for caring for me when my life was a wreck. I know I need Your wisdom today, and every day, to make the choices that take me forward in recovery so I can effectively live the life You created for me. Help me to make "grace exchanges" each day so that my brokenness and sin go, and Your love and grace fills me up. Amen

We need the help of God that comes in the form of His amazing grace.