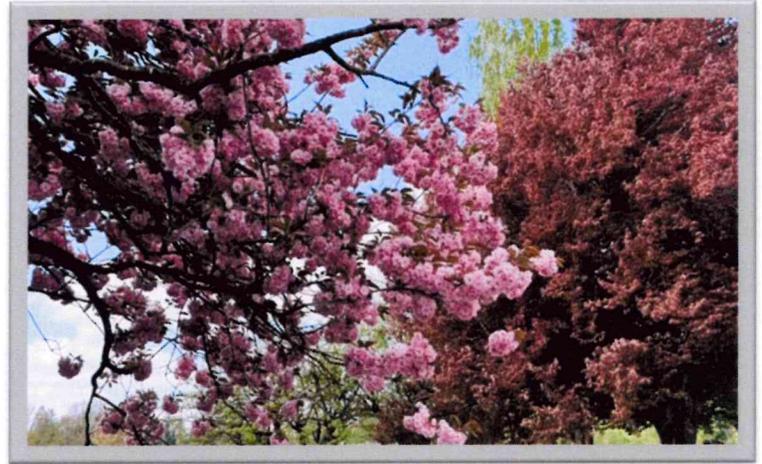


LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

Daily Meditations



APRIL 2026

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



These meditations are available online for computer, tablets, and smart phones at:
<https://www.partnersinhope.ca/meditations>

View our daily video blog at:
<https://www.partnersinhope.ca/hope-for-today>

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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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>

PRAYER FOR HEALING AND RESTORATION

Loving God, Thank You for rescuing me from the dark power of Satan and bringing me into a loving relationship with Your Son, Jesus. I ask for wisdom and understanding from Your Holy Spirit in order to live as a person who honours You. Heal me. Make me new. Make me a strong follower of Christ. Root me deeply in Your love. I place my trust in Your power that can do far more in me than I could ask for or imagine. Amen.

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY Daily Meditations

APRIL 2026

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VOLUME 11, NUMBER 04

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.

DOING ALL WE CAN TO HAVE FAITH

Few people are more aware of their need for God's help to restore them to sanity than recovering addicts. We know how unmanageable our life has been and how powerless we were to stop the suffering and chaos. What a relief it was to turn to God who was ready, willing, and able to receive and restore us.

Do all you can to add to your life these things: to your faith add goodness; to your goodness add knowledge. (2 Peter 1:5b ERV)

There is a "God's part" and an "our part" to this new life we have. God sent Jesus into the world to die for our sins so that we might be free from the penalty of sin, which is death. Our part is to humbly admit our wrongs and receive forgiveness and the new life God is offering us. God has established spiritual principles for a life that is good, pleasing and perfect. Our part is to get to know those principles and obey them. When our character defects cause us to stumble, we ask God to forgive us and help us change our ways.

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. Faith comes from hearing the message. And the message that is heard is the message about Christ. (Hebrews 11:6 NLT, Romans 10:17 NIRV)

Our part in the recovery process is that with God's help we learn to have faith. How do we do that? We take time, at least daily, to learn what God is saying. There are many printed devotionals, apps, audio podcasts, teachings on YouTube and elsewhere to help us read and understand God's Word in the Bible. God's message is as near to us as our phone or tablet.

At the heart of all our practices is faith:--faith in God that He is good; faith in God's direction for our lives; faith in God's principles as the best path for us to follow; faith in God's power to help us take the next right step and do the next right thing; faith to put what we learn into practice in all our affairs.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You are always with me and willing to provide what I need for a successful day. Help me to trust Your Presence ever with me, Your Power to change me, and Your Wisdom to guide me. Amen

Do your best to please God. Be a worker who doesn't need to be ashamed.

(2 Timothy 2:15a NIRV)

OUR VULNERABILITY TO EMPYNESS

NOTES

At various times in recovery, especially early on, we feel vulnerable. We've stepped away from the familiar life we knew. Even though our lifestyle was destructive to our well-being, it was still the life we knew. Now we are experiencing a nagging sense of unsettledness brought on by this major life change. In these times of vulnerability and weakness God makes some astounding promises to us.

By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him ... he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires. (2 Peter 1:3-4 NLT)

We may not know how to overcome all that is wrong, but today we can choose for a new way of living.

Some of us may say, "That's a lovely promise but how do we activate the switch that unlocks these resources for us?" Fortunately, it's not a complicated process.

1) We may not know how to overcome all that is wrong, but today we can choose for a new way of living. God promises to give us more and more understanding as we go. *The fear of the Lord is true wisdom; to forsake evil is real understanding.* (Job 28:28 NLT)

2) We become more and more stable as we read about God's plans and promises in the Bible, and then choose to behave accordingly. *All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.* (2 Timothy 3:16 NLT)

3) We persist and practice "speaking truth to ourselves" rather than simply reacting to how we are feeling. *We reject all shameful deeds and underhanded methods. We don't try to trick anyone or distort the word of God. We tell the truth before God, and all who are honest know this.* (2 Corinthians 4:2 NLT)

Father, Heavenly Father, help me to persevere in putting Your principles into daily practice. I trust You for peace of mind and heart as I quiet my rebellious thoughts and choose for the peace and contentment that comes from doing what is right and good. Amen

APRIL 30

IT'S TIME TO TAKE A BREAK

Some sentences in the Bible are so meaningful to our situation that we just want to read them over and over again. Jesus' invitation to us today is one of those. We live in a world of busyness and stress where the challenges we face are discouraging and cause us to fear for the future. At the time we are most weary, how comforting to hear the words of Jesus inviting us to come to Him so He can give us rest.

Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. (Matthew 11:28-29 NLT)

At the time we are most weary, how comforting to hear the words of Jesus inviting us to come to Him and He will give us rest.

Some days it's difficult to watch the newscast and listen to more bad news. Financial problems, protests, disease, natural disasters, global warming, and on and on and on it goes. We get weary hearing it all. We feel like we've been given a heavy burden to carry. Jesus doesn't wave a magic wand to rid us of the burdens we are carrying, nor does He encourage us to deny that problems exist. Rather, He invites us to live in the truth that He is in control. He has a way for us to do what is right and find rest for our soul at the same time. Who wouldn't want that?

Lord, you will give perfect peace to those who commit themselves to be faithful to you. That's because they trust in you. It is useless to get up early and stay up late in order to earn a living. God takes care of his own, even while they sleep. (Isaiah 26:3 NIRV; Psalm 127:2 CEV)

Jesus invites us to come to Him and listen for His tender voice as He encourages us to move forward. It won't be more than we can handle nor less than we can carry. He wants to bless us with gifts of joy and peace that will build us up and help us support others who are also weary and in need of care.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You have not lost control of things even when it might appear that many unsolvable situations exist. Help me to come to You with all my problems. I invite You to show me what I should undertake to do and what I should let go of; what I should attempt to resolve and what I should entrust into Your care. Give me the strength and ability to do the work You have prepared for me to do today. I choose to rest in the sure knowledge that You are at work in me and also in the world You created. Amen

APRIL 3

GOOD FRIDAY – GOD'S GOOD PLAN IN GOD'S GOOD TIME

We often give up on God before His plan for us, in His perfect timing, takes effect. Jesus' death on Good Friday came before His resurrection on Easter Sunday. Things looked hopeless for Jesus' followers during the time between those two events, but God was still in charge. Satan might have thought he had victory when Jesus died but God had a plan, and He had the power to carry it out.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. (Isaiah 55:8 NIV)

Before God created the world He knew that despite the good intentions of humans they would sin and would need a saviour. God's plan was that Jesus would be wounded and bruised and shed His precious blood on the cross for the sin of the whole world. Jesus died for sins He didn't commit. Jesus was beaten and mocked and mistreated because of the anger, jealousy, and evil that others exhibited. Because He lived a perfect life, Jesus was able to sacrificially offer Himself as payment (death) for the accumulated debt of the sin of the whole world, including yours and mine.

No one takes my life from me. I give it up willingly! I have the power to give it up and the power to receive it back again, just as my Father commanded me to do. (John 10:18 CEV)

God's plan went into place and was worked out at just the right time. The cross of Jesus reminds us that God's ways are different from our ways and while God's timing might differ from what we desire, God's timing is always perfect.

At just the right time Christ died for ungodly people. He died for us when we had no power of our own. (Romans 5:6 NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You for giving me new life through the death and resurrection of Jesus. I am forever humbled by Jesus' obedience to death, even death on a cross. Help me to live each day obedient to Your word, Your ways, and Your timing, trusting that you will make all things right as I surrender to Your will. Thank You for working all things together for good in my life. May all I do and say glorify Your Holy Name. Amen

Here is how God has shown his love for us. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8 NIRV

FINDING WISDOM IN UNCOMFORTABLE PLACES

Becoming strong and steady in our recovery requires that we keep on listening to and learning from God's Word and from the experience, strength, and hope of others. It's easy to be disrespectful of experiences some share with us simply because we don't like their personality or something in their journey is different from ours. In our arrogance we believe they are wrong in what they are saying and therefore have nothing to teach us. The sad truth is that when we do this, we shut ourselves off from valuable lessons their life experience could teach us.

Those who make fun of others look for wisdom and don't find it. But knowledge comes easily to those who understand what is right. (Proverbs 14:6 NIRV)

Those who make fun of others look for wisdom and don't find it.
Proverbs 14:6a
NIRV

We need humility to listen to those who are newer to recovery than we are. Sometimes the freshness of their message and their description of the struggle can shine a needed light on areas of our own heart that still need attention. Their way of presenting may still be a bit rough around the edges but the truth at the core of their sharing might be just what we need today.

We need to hear and learn from those who offer constructive criticism and challenge habits or attitudes they observe in us. Stinking thinking creeps up on us in so many areas. The very fact that we are making fun of someone suggests there is some expression of a character defect that requires attention.

A good mentor or sponsor will bring things to the conversation that are inconvenient and challenging. Too often we are more ready to "get a new sponsor" than we are to ask God to show us the wisdom we're missing in what our sponsor is saying.

It is never fun to be corrected. In fact, at the time it is always painful. But if we learn to obey by being corrected, we will do right and live at peace. (Hebrews 12:11 CEV)

Today's invitation and challenge is to welcome the inconvenient or uncomfortable truth rather than reject and scorn what we are being taught.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I still have so much to learn. Please help me to be teachable each day. Give me eyes to see and ears to hear how You are speaking to me, particularly about things I find difficult to receive. Amen

LIVING IN VICTORY RATHER THAN AS A VICTIM

A person with a victim mentality has learned to focus on suffering while trying to avoid more at any cost. Some isolate and live behind high walls. They complain and blame and are easily angered. Some bury their feelings, opinions and desires and just do what they are told, believing they are powerless. They believe that life can only improve if someone else fixes what is wrong.

God says, *I have swept away your sins like a cloud. I have scattered your offenses like the morning mist. Oh, return to me, for I have paid the price to set you free.* (Isaiah 44:22 NLT)

God promises us that we can live victoriously. We don't need to just survive and cope with what life has handed us.

God promises that regardless of what has happened to us, we can have victory over it by trusting Him and following His direction. God also assures us that nothing in heaven or on earth can separate us from His love.

Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? As the Scriptures say, "For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep." No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us. (Romans 8:35-37 NLT)

While our specific experience of pain might not be mentioned in the above verses, the intent of the writer is to tell us that whatever injustice and trouble we have suffered, God's word remains true in our situation. God promises us that we can live victoriously. We don't need to just survive and cope with what life has handed us. Our future has not been stolen by the abusive person in our past. God wants to pour out His grace upon us and give us new life. Are we willing to let go of the old and embrace the new?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to let go of the insanity of my past that continues to fill my heart and mind. Help me to embrace your love and healing. Fill me with your grace and teach me how to live well and establish healthy relationships. Amen

PRACTICAL WISDOM – PRACTICE BEING CHEERFUL

Scientific evidence suggests that being cheerful seems to have positive benefits on our over-all health. There are studies that suggest being cheerful and optimistic limits stress, reduces pain, supports our immune system, and even helps to protect our heart. Is it any wonder that long before there were tests to prove it, the Bible already had this important information available?

A cheerful heart makes you healthy. But a broken spirit dries you up. Worry weighs us down; a cheerful word picks us up. (Proverbs 17:22 NIRV, Proverbs 12:25 MSG)

Don't burn out; keep yourselves fueled and aflame. Be alert servants of the Master, cheerfully expectant. Don't quit in hard times; pray all the harder

Studies have shown that those who live with joy and cheerfulness are better positioned to fight off seasonal bugs like cold and flu. Older people who reported feeling happy lived longer than those who were least happy. This should motivate us to be thankful for who we are, and to choose to be cheerful today.

A happy heart makes the face cheerful, but heartache crushes the spirit. All the days of the oppressed are wretched, but the cheerful heart has a continual feast. (Proverbs 15:13, 15 NIV)

We tend to be more creative and to solve problems better when we are happy and optimistic rather than living in fear and worry, supposing the problems before us are bigger than God's ability to make a way through for us. God does not want us to pretend that problems don't exist. Denial didn't fix our problems

with addiction and it won't solve the challenges we face in recovery. Our part is to pray often, work hard, and trust God in all circumstances. When we do, God's faithful promise is that he will be with us always.

Be cheerful. Keep things in good repair. Keep your spirits up. Think in harmony. Be agreeable. Do all that, and the God of love and peace will be with you for sure. (2 Corinthians 13:11 MSG)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to live with joy in my heart and be cheerful no matter what challenges I face. I ask for Your wisdom as I choose to do the right thing and face my problems head-on rather than avoiding or denying them. I trust that You will help and strengthen me as I move forward. Thank You for Your unfailing love and care for me. Amen

EASTER SUNDAY – THE HIGHEST POWER

All of humankind's sin – from the beginning to the end of time – was laid on Jesus and not even the weight of that could hold him down. Jesus rose from the dead. Jesus' resurrection demonstrates that no darkness or evil, no pain or brokenness can overcome the power of God for those who believe in Jesus.

I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms. (Ephesians 1:19-20 NLT)

No matter how fearsome or broken our lives seem to us, not even the weight of that can keep us down when we are in Christ. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is in us who completely surrender our will and our lives to God.

But you, dear friends, carefully build yourselves up in this most holy faith by praying in the Holy Spirit, staying right at the center of God's love, keeping your arms open and outstretched, ready for the mercy of our Master, Jesus Christ. This is the unending life, the real life! (Jude 20-21 MSG)

What seems impossible for us to believe becomes possible when God is involved. When we invite God into any situation things will happen that are beyond all we could hope for or imagine. God's power is much stronger than anything we have ever encountered. God's kindness is more tender than anything we may have ever experienced. When Jesus comes into our lives He brings power and solutions and hope for a new way of life. He fills us with His Holy Spirit. As we acknowledge that Jesus is alive within us with power to meet every need and solve every problem, all doubt about our ability to deal with problems will flee and we will move forward in our life in recovery.

He saved us because of his mercy, and not because of any good things that we have done. God washed us by the power of the Holy Spirit. He gave us new birth and a fresh beginning. (Titus 3:5 CEV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You are God and You have the power to bring about change and healing in each life that is given over to You, including mine. Fill me with the mighty power of Your Holy Spirit so I can walk confidently in this new life You have given me. Amen

What seems impossible for us to believe is only impossible when God is not involved.

WISDOM FOR THE RECOVERY JOURNEY

From cover to cover the Bible is filled with wisdom and good direction for our lives. As we read and meditate on God's word and obey His instructions, we will experience a meaningful and purposeful life. This is what Step 11 speaks to when it reminds us, "we sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out."

The wise are mightier than the strong, and those with knowledge grow stronger and stronger. If you really want to become wise, you must begin by having respect for the Lord. All those who follow his rules have good understanding. (Proverbs 24:5 NLT, Psalm 111:10 NIRV)

**God
wants to
help us
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we have
to do is
ask Him.**

God wants to help us know what is right and good. All we have to do is ask Him to teach us. *If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.* (James 1:5 NLT)

When we surrender our lives to God and invite Him to be the Lord of our lives, God doesn't just give us words and instructions. God's Spirit comes to live in our hearts. He will teach us about God's will for our lives and will also give us the power to carry it out. When we put God's principles into practice, we will see that what God says really works. We will grow stronger as our actions reflect the wisdom that fills our hearts. In this whole process.

But when the friend comes, the Spirit of the Truth, he will take you by the hand and guide you into all the truth there is. He won't draw attention to himself but will make sense out of what is about to happen and, indeed, out of all that I have done and said. (John 16:13 MSG)

Not only do we gain wisdom as we seek God's direction and practice His principles in all our affairs but we enjoy the safety, peace and guidance of the Spirit of Truth as well.

Prayer: Loving God, My desire is that You would grant me a willing heart to follow You Give me understanding of Your word and help me to obey what You say, so I may have wisdom in all I do and say. Amen

WHO PUSHES MY BUTTON?

The Lord gives strength to his people; the Lord blesses his people with peace. (Psalm 29:11 NIV)

How often have we found ourselves in conversation with someone and a remark is made that "pushes our button?" The next thing we know, a stream of bitter words flows from somewhere inside us. The volume of our voice increases, or we go silent and distance ourselves from that person. When something like this happens, we need to consider the cause. We are clearly not at peace with something inside us and whatever that is, it needs to be brought to the light so that we can be healed.

"Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the Lord, who has compassion on you. (Isaiah 54:10 NIV)

**The Lord
gives
strength to
his people;
the Lord
blesses his
people with
peace.**

Psalm 29:11 NIV

We live in an angry world with people who are sensitive and easily upset. Both in addition and in recovery we can experience physical and emotional pain that results from someone else's harshness. When someone "pushes our button", God invites us to first take the problem to Him. God will calm the inner turmoil we are experiencing and bring peace to our souls. We can then take the appropriate action for the situation. Perhaps we need to ask God for the courage to speak quietly with the person who stirred us up, so that we might sort out what happened. Other actions may be to simply "live and let live" or, we may be guided to establish healthy boundaries with that person.

Work at getting along with each other and with God. Otherwise you'll never get so much as a glimpse of God. Make sure no one gets left out of God's generosity. Keep a sharp eye out for weeds of bitter discontent. A thistle or two gone to seed can ruin a whole garden in no time. (Hebrews 12:14-15 MSG)

Prayer: Almighty God, To You all hearts are open, I ask that You reveal the source of my anger when certain situations arise, and someone has the power to push my button. Please heal me of any underlying root of bitterness that may be lurking in my soul and fill me with Your joy and peace. Amen

EXCHANGING OUR WILL FOR GOD'S WILL

God teaches us to know His will through the Bible and through following good counsel from pastors, sponsors, and Christian friends who have been faithfully walking with God for some time. As we regularly replace our will with God's will and plan for our lives, our life will take on new meaning and will be satisfying.

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness. (Jeremiah 29:11; 31:3 NIV)

As we regularly replace our will with God's will and plan for our lives, our life will take on new meaning and will be satisfying.

Turning our will and our life over to the care of God is not simply asking God to bless what we believe and determine we should do. It is actively researching the Bible for what God says brings satisfaction in life. Because of His love for us, God warns us to stay away from those things that He knows will injure us. God's principles for living are not twisted by wounds and resentments and shame and fear. His desire for us is to know a satisfying way of life and to live it well. As we submit to building on that foundation, life will change and become more fulfilling.

Christ has brought us into this place of highest privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory.

We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they are good for us – they help us learn to endure. And endurance develops strength of character in us, and character strengthens our confident expectation of salvation. And this expectation will not disappoint us. (Romans 5:2-4 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Often I feel irritated and stretched by the unfamiliar ways in which You are leading me. However, I humbly admit, "Your wisdom and Your ways are superior to mine." Though I may not feel like doing what you say, I will trust You and adjust my life according to Your word. Today, I invite You to continue to lead and guide me in all my ways for You truly are my rock, and my fortress, my strength, and my deliverer. Amen

LOVING OTHERS – MAKING AMENDS

As we recover from addiction, it is emotionally draining when we come to the place of acknowledging and dealing with the harm we have caused. We've lived for a long time blaming others for the way they treated us. What we fail to acknowledge is how our actions, resulting from the fear and anger bottled up inside us, caused harm to others. Regardless of the reason for our behaviour, we are encouraged to make a list of those we have harmed and become willing to make amends to all of them.

You're familiar with the command to the ancients, 'Do not murder.' I'm telling you that anyone who is so much as angry with a brother or sister is guilty of murder. Carelessly call a brother 'idiot!' and you just might find yourself hauled into court. Thoughtlessly yell 'stupid!' at a sister and you are on the brink of hellfire. The simple moral fact is that words kill. (Matthew 5:22-23 MSG)

Deep rooted unforgiveness results in angry outbursts and rage towards others. Sometimes even those who genuinely love us suffer because of what is going on at a deep level within us. We may feel sorry for what we did or said to a person after an abusive outburst, and perhaps have apologized, but to fully make amends we need to understand what causes us to behave as we do. Unless we come to terms with the root of our problem we will again behave in the same way and cause even more harm.

One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." (Matthew 22:35-40 NIV)

Making amends is a test of our integrity to honour others above ourselves. Let's consider who we are today and to whom we need to make amends.

Prayer: Gracious God, I ask that You heal me from the burden of the wounds and guilt that I have carried for so long. Help me to forgive those who have harmed me and also help me make amends to those I have harmed. Amen

Making amends is a test of our integrity to honour others above ourselves.

COMING TO TERMS WITH OUR LIFESTYLE

Coming to terms with our lifestyle in addiction requires us to admit that we have zero self-control where our dependencies are involved. Our self-will is not enough to stop us from continuing on a dark path. The demon inside our heads is insistent that we do whatever is necessary to fulfill its demands or suffer the consequences. Our bodies follow through and give in to its demands. Recovery begins when we admit that the power behind our addiction is beyond our control.

Recovery

begins when we admit that the power behind our addiction is beyond our control.

You followed the ways of this world and obeyed the devil. He rules the world, and his spirit has power over everyone who doesn't obey God. Once we were also ruled by the selfish desires of our bodies and minds. We had made God angry, and we were going to be punished like everyone else. (Ephesians 2:2-3 CEV)

Friends and family members may have spoken to us about our lifestyle and suggested we need to get help. Because we thought we were in control, we paid no attention to their concerns. But, when we tried to stop what we were doing, it was evident that we were not in control. We were ruled by the selfish desires of our bodies and minds. There are two powers at work in this world. One wants to destroy us and the other wants to give us eternal life. Which power will we choose to obey?

This is what I told them: Obey me, and I will be your God, and you will be my people. Do everything as I say, and all will be well! But my people would not listen to me. They kept doing whatever they wanted, following the stubborn desires of their evil hearts. They went backward instead of forward. (Jeremiah 7:23-24 NLT)

When we admit that we are "powerless over our dependencies" we are making a true statement. Thankfully, there is a power greater than ourselves and if we obey Him, "all will be well". Today is another opportunity to turn our will and life over to God's care and experience His life-changing power at work in us.

Prayer. Gracious God, I need a Power greater than myself to restore me to sanity and give me a meaningful life. Please strengthen me to follow Your ways for I know I am powerless to help myself. Amen

A PERSON OF INTEGRITY

Integrity is one of the most valued character qualities a person can have. A person of integrity has strong moral and ethical principles. They are honest regardless of their circumstances, or the company they keep. What you see on the outside is the same person they are on the inside. People of integrity keep their word even when it is not convenient. They are honest in all their dealings, personal as well as professional. They practice morality in their sexual life, both in mind and body. They are not perfect. They make mistakes and occasionally sin, but they do not cover up their faults. They confess them, and deal with any consequences.

Righteousness guards the person of integrity, but wickedness overthrows the sinner. (Proverbs 13:6 NIV)

Integrity is not a character quality any of us would claim to have when we lived in addiction. It's also not something that automatically appears when we come into recovery. However, integrity can and will be developed in a person who lives according to the Word of God and whose confidence is in God alone.

I know that you are pleased with me, for my enemy does not triumph over me. Because of my integrity you uphold me and set me in your presence forever. (Psalm 41:11-12 NIV)

Integrity can and will be developed in a person who lives according to the Word of God and whose confidence is in God alone.

People of integrity have the peace of a clear conscience. As each of us live according to the Word of God we experience a deep inner peace because we know that we have not violated our conscience or harmed someone else. In contrast, when our lives lack moral wholeness, we live in constant fear of being "found out" as frauds.

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

If our activities, thoughts, and desires were exposed today, would we be considered a person of integrity?

Prayer. Heavenly Father, My desire is to love and care for others as You have faithfully loved and cared for me. As I walk in Your ways, help me to become a person of integrity. Amen

GOOD THINGS COME TO THOSE WHO WAIT

Many of us have heard the saying, “Good things come to those who wait.” This proverb reminds us that if we are patient and keep on doing what we know is right, we will eventually achieve our goal. God’s word has more to say about this.

Good things come to those who do what is right. Joy comes to those whose hearts are honest. You who are godly, be glad because of what the Lord has done. Praise him, because his name is holy. (Psalm 97:11-12 NIRV)

***But put
God’s
kingdom
first. Do
what he
wants you to
do. Then all
those things
will also be
given to you.***

Matthew 6:33 NIRV

We do not have all the answers for our future and perhaps feel insecure about some of the unknowns. God’s promise to us is that if we will follow Him, live with integrity, and do what is right, He will fill our lives with good things and our hearts with joy. Not only that, but in our eternal life with God, after our bodies die and are put in the grave, we will experience wonderful things that are way beyond our ability to even think about or imagine, and we will enjoy these gifts forever.

Some people live for God’s glory, for honor, and for life that cannot be destroyed. They live for those things by always continuing to do good. God will give eternal life to them. (Romans 2:7 ERV)

The best news for all of us is that God knows we are unable to constantly live good lives on our own and so He encourages us to receive the gift of His Holy Spirit who will fill us with power and give us the wisdom to overcome our weakness and the temptations that we encounter along the way.

Even though you are evil, you know how to give good gifts to your children. How much more will your Father who is in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him! (Luke 11:13 NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I confess that I am weak when it comes to temptation. Please fill me with Your Holy Spirit so I have the wisdom to wait patiently for things to change and have the power to do what is right regardless of the circumstances I encounter. I want to live for Your honour and continue to do good each day. Please help me! Amen

OUR BEST THINKING GOT US HERE

When we admitted that our lives had become unmanageable, many of us entered into detox and then treatment programs where we found support. Each day we grew stronger. We began to attend 12-step recovery meetings and in many of those meetings often heard the words, “Our best thinking got us here.” With the clarity that time in recovery brings, we are now able to admit that our self-centered thinking and actions got us into the mess we were in.

Christ is the mighty power of God and the wisdom of God. This “foolish” plan of God is far wiser than the wisest of human plans, and God’s weakness is far stronger than the greatest of human strength (1 Corinthians 1:24b-25 NLT)

Many of us have also discovered that no matter how strong we might be feeling, or how smart we think we are, it’s not enough to bring us through to sustained recovery. We will tire out and we will give up the struggle if we think any physical or mental strength we feel is enough for the long haul. Strength and wisdom are gifts. They are the result of an ongoing relationship with God. They come from trusting God, waiting for God to act, following God’s word, and seeking His plan for our lives. This is what gives us joy, keeps us safe, and helps us respond with humility to people and circumstances around us. This is the sure foundation on which to build our new life in recovery.

Outside of God, we can’t even maintain the desire to do what is right let alone find the strength to act on what we know we ought to do.

For God is working in you, giving you the desire to obey him and the power to do what pleases him. (Philippians 2:13 NLT)

It is the experience of those who walk with God, that we can rely on His power when we feel weak, and that’s what actually makes us strong.

God says, ***“My gracious favor is all you need. My power works best in your weakness.”*** (2 Corinthians 12:9 NLT)

Prayer: Gracious God, Thank you for giving me new life, new thoughts, and new strength, as I choose to daily surrender my life to You and live in the power of Your Holy Spirit. Amen

***Outside of
God, we can’t
even
maintain the
desire to do
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let alone find
the strength
to act on
what we
know we
ought to do.***

THE EASTER QUESTION

Most of Jesus' friends abandoned Him before He died on the cross. After His death they huddled together in a locked room wondering what to do next. In their grief and sorrow, they were sure that the troubles that awaited them outside the room were more than they could endure. They didn't know how to go forward because Jesus was dead and they had no hope -- or so they thought. While they sat in that room, an incredible thing happened. Jesus appeared to them.

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. (John 20:19-20)

Will we, like Thomas, realize that something incredible happens when we ask Jesus to show us who He truly is?

Jesus gave them convincing proof that He was truly alive. He wasn't just a ghost or a delusion, but a person they could feel and touch. He was alive! Wonder, joy and peace filled their hearts.

However, one of Jesus' disciples, named Thomas, wasn't with the others when Jesus first made an appearance to them. When Thomas was told that they had seen Jesus, he doubted that it was true.

Like Thomas, some of us have known the discouragement of hopes dashed and opportunities lost. In our broken fearful lives, we doubt the presence of God with us to help.

Later when they were all together, including Thomas, Jesus came again. Jesus did not judge Thomas for having doubts but invited Him to, "**Stop doubting and believe.**" Jesus also told Thomas, "**Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.**" (John 20:29 NIV)

Will we, like Thomas, truly believe that something incredible happens when we meet Jesus and He shows us who He truly is?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, forgive me for doubting who You are and what You have done for me. Help me to be like Thomas who stopped doubting and believed. Amen

OVERLY RESPONSIBLE

As we go forward in recovery, we have come to the realization that we are accountable for the actions we have done, the behaviour that has impacted our relationships, and the problems we created throughout our life in addition. It's not been an easy process for us to identify and take responsibility for these things, but it has been liberating and life changing as we have done so.

For some of us it's been a balancing act between taking responsibility for our part and being overly responsible for the actions of others that were beyond our control. While we may have had a part to play in making life difficult for others, their choices remain their responsibility. It is up to each person to identify their own issues and take any necessary action. It's not our job to sort others out and fix their problems.

The Lord will guide you continually, giving you water when you are dry and restoring your strength. You will be like a well-watered garden, like an ever-flowing spring. (Isaiah 58:11 NLT)

It is important that we care and support others, assisting them when help is truly needed. We do a disservice to others when we continually do things for them that, with instruction, they can do for themselves. By being overly responsible we get in God's way because God uses all the circumstances of a person's life to draw them to Himself.

People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy. A person without self-control is like a city with broken-down walls. (Proverbs 28:13, 25:28 NLT)

We do a disservice to others when we continually do things for them that, with instruction, they can do for themselves.

Boundaries help us live respectfully and safely in our relationships. When we define and uphold personal boundaries, they contribute to our peace. When we get a clearer picture of what it takes to live in healthy ways, God will be honoured by having first place in all our decisions and actions.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to identify and live within healthy boundaries. I want to be supportive of others but avoid harming them by getting in the way of Your work in their lives. Please help me to be both caring and wise in all my relationships. Amen

COURAGE TO CHOOSE CHANGE

We have all sorts of reasons why we think we can't change. We've told ourselves that we've always been this way. We've often tried to change and failed to do so. There's no hope. No one will help us. We have become familiar with our limitations and what is necessary to just get by each day. We are so focused on problems and blaming others that we no longer take time to think about solutions that would give us hope. In fact, we've come to believe that it's impossible to get well and have a good life

The courage to change that Jesus offers us is the willingness to let go of those things that have kept us in bondage to hopelessness and instead begin to believe in His availability and willingness to heal us.

Jesus met a man who had been ill for 38 years. He'd tried many times to get well but there was always some reason why it didn't happen. Over the years he began to believe he couldn't do what was necessary to be healed and that no one would help him. His identity as a powerless victim was rooted firmly in his heart. He believed that his situation was hopeless. Jesus knew this but also knew many other things the man did not know. Jesus asked the man a revealing question, "Would you like to get well?"

When Jesus saw him and knew he had been ill for a long time, he asked him, "Would you like to get well?" "I can't, sir," the sick man said, "for I have no one to put me into the pool when the water bubbles up. Someone else always gets there ahead of me." Jesus told him, "Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!" Instantly, the man was healed! He rolled up his sleeping mat and began walking! (John 5:6-9 NLT)

The courage to change that Jesus offers is the willingness to let go of those things that have kept us in bondage to hopelessness and instead choose to believe in His willingness and ability to heal us. Jesus

asks us to do two things – trust Him and obey what He tells us to do. Are we willing to change our thinking and choose for the courage that Jesus is making available to us today?

Prayer: God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Amen

YOU ARE ONLY AS SICK AS YOUR SECRETS

In recovery circles there is a saying, "You are only as sick as your secrets." Recovery is a process where, with God and trusted caring people, we begin to come alive to the life God has planned for us. In the right place, and at the appropriate time, we start dealing with our darkest secrets.

The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living. (Romans 13:12 NLT)

We follow the outline of the 12 Step Program and begin to put each of the steps into practice. Sometimes we find that while we are ready for God's will to be done in some areas, we are fearful and uneasy about having God's light shine in others. When we are unwilling to expose our hidden secrets, the guilt and shame from our past festers and causes harm to our recovery.

There is no judgment against anyone who believes in him. But anyone who does not believe in him has already been judged for not believing in God's one and only Son. And the judgment is based on this fact: God's light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil. All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be exposed. (John 3:18-20 NLT)

God wants us to come out of darkness. The longer we cooperate with darkness, the more we will hide from the light. If we choose to remain in darkness we will not be aware of the light that leads to life even though it is available to us.

Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, "I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life." (John 8:12 NLT)

To the extent that we surrender our secret lives to Jesus, the light of the world, and receive His healing, we will receive strength and His glorious power to live life to the full.

Prayer: Loving God, Many things are buried in me and I'm not sure how to bring them to the light. Please strengthen me with Your power to follow the light that leads to life and joyous living. Amen

Recovery is a process where, with God and trusted caring people, we begin to come alive ...and start dealing with our darkest secrets.

UNDERSTANDING THE CARE OF GOD

On a regular basis, when you climb into bed at night do you sleep soundly, or do you count sheep? Do you feel at peace, or do you worry about the problems tomorrow may bring? Jesus often told stories about everyday life to help us understand spiritual principles. One day Jesus spoke about a secure sheep pen where sheep were held. This sheep pen provided shelter against thieves, wild animals, and the weather. In telling the story Jesus wanted us to understand how we can find security and belonging.

When sheep are under the care of the Good Shepherd they can lie down and know they are safe in His care.

Anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice. (John 10:1-5 NIV)

The sheep pen that Jesus refers to appears to be a safe place in this world. Jesus is the entry gate by which the sheep enter the safe place. He is also the Good Shepherd who cares for the sheep. Who are the ones who are cared for by the Good Shepherd? They are the ones who have accepted Jesus' death on the cross as payment for their sins. Jesus is the only gateway to God's promised care and protection. If sheep remain outside the sheep pen, they are vulnerable to enemies. Predators may be lurking. Sheep stealers may try to steal, kill and destroy the helpless sheep. However, when sheep are under the care of the Good Shepherd they can lie down and know they are safe in His care.

The Lord is my shepherd; I have all that I need. He lets me rest in green meadows; he leads me beside peaceful streams. He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths, bringing honor to his name. (Psalm 23:1-3 NLT)

Trayer: Heavenly Father, I want to be safe and secure in Your care. I am thankful for Jesus who gave His life that I might be Your precious child and live with You forever. Help me to listen to Your voice and to follow You only. I am forever grateful for the peace and protection You provide for the sheep in Your care. Amen

FOLLOWING THROUGH

In "How It Works" we read and hear the following words read regularly at 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 AA page 58) Anyone who has made an honest attempt at recovery knows the hard work that is required. What gives us encouragement and hope is that many who have diligently done the required work have succeeded. **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)

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

We can know all sorts of things about God as we come to believe that He is a power greater than ourselves who can restore us to sanity. We can even decide to turn our will and life over to His care. The real test of our desire for recovery is the follow-through of putting God's Word and the Steps into practice, one day at a time. Some days will be relatively easy and other days 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 acknowledge our character defects and then ask God to remove them. Making a list of those we have harmed and making amends to them is intimidating for most of us. However, God's promises and the experience, strength, and hope of those who have gone before us tell us that, as we follow this path and do things one step at a time, God will get us to our goal.

Trayer: 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 Your principles and strengthen me to do the Step work required of me each day. Amen

Big Book page 58

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

GAINING AND PRACTICING DISCRETION

In the Big Book of AA, we are advised to use discretion in knowing how much time and attention to give to one situation versus the time others might benefit from if given more of our time and support. Employers are encouraged to use discretion in how they approach employees they want to help, even by 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 to 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, or 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 allow Him to lead us on 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. In other words, we learn through journeying with God, obeying what He says works, and then benefiting from the lessons we learn as we witness 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 show wisdom and discretion in all my affairs. Help me practice Your ways in each situation I encounter today. When I should be silent, help me to relinquish the desire to speak. Where I need to practice healthy boundaries, help me to do so. Help me to learn from the lessons You are teaching me as I walk with You each day. Amen

IMPERFECT BUT NOT DISCOURAGED

God wants us to be successful in recovery and in life. One of the truths that God shares with us is that Satan's mission is to find ways to cause us to doubt the forgiveness we have received when we chose to have faith in Jesus' death as payment for our sin. The Bible warns us that our enemy is prowling around looking for ways to deceive us.

Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. (1 Peter 5:8-9 NIV)

It doesn't matter to the devil what he uses to accuse and condemn us. If we are doing well he'll remind us of times in the past when we did poorly. If we experience joy in following the ways of God he'll attempt to steal our joy by making us believe we are proud and self-righteous. We need to believe what God says about us and be conscious of the fact that the devil is a liar.

He has always hated the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies. (John 8:44b NLT)

No matter how well we are doing, the evil one's tactic is to eat away at our confidence through showing us how imperfect we are. He will remind us of a time in the past when we relapsed. He will tell us that we should have done more, or still could do more, to withstand temptation. While we can't justify a bad choice based on several good ones, it is important not to focus on failure when we've had many successes in the same period. God is more patient with us than we are with ourselves. We need to discipline ourselves to rejoice in the encouragement that God's word brings and embrace the unfailing love of God.

And so, dear friends, while you are waiting for these things to happen, make every effort to be found living peaceful lives that are pure and blameless in his sight. And remember, our Lord's patience gives people time to be saved. (2 Peter 3:14-15a NLT)

Prayer: Gracious God, I am thankful that Your mercy is new every morning and that Your love and compassion never cease towards Your children. I am grateful that Your word leads me in the path of right living. Thank You that I am pure and blameless in Your sight. Amen

We need to discipline ourselves to rejoice in the encouragement that God's word brings and embrace the unfailing love of God.

TRAUMA

Many of the events in our lives that contributed to us becoming dependent on substances or unhealthy relationships were traumatic and caused us to retreat into hiding. We were not prepared to discuss these events with others, so we buried them deep in our soul. We then sought other means to help us deal with the intense pain. However, covering up traumatic events with painkillers does not make them go away. In fact, as so many of us can testify, the memories, whether we are consciously aware of them or not, cause fear and shame to grow and become like mountains that block and confuse our thinking and affect our behaviour. God invites us to bring the trauma we have suffered and its impact on us to Him for comfort and healing.

God is our mighty fortress, always ready to help in times of trouble. And so, we won't be afraid! Let the earth tremble and the mountains tumble into the deepest sea. Pray to me in time of trouble. I will rescue you, and you will honor me. (Psalm 46:1-2, 50:15 CEV)

Covering up traumatic events with painkillers does not make them go away.

When a ship is tossed about on an angry sea the captain will seek a safe harbour where the ship can anchor and wait for the storm to pass. If the ship has sustained damage, it can be repaired while resting in the harbour. Some of us have been through many storms in our lives and are battered and broken because we have not found a safe harbour where we could rest. God offers that to us. All we need to do is to come to Him. When we come, we can allow Him to comfort us and heal the trauma we have endured. He will lead us to quiet waters, He will restore our soul.

The Lord your God wins victory after victory and is always with you. He celebrates and sings because of you, and he will refresh your life with his love. The Lord has promised: Your sorrow has ended, and you can celebrate. (Zephaniah 3:17-18 CEV)

Prayer: Loving God, I come to You because You invite me, and I need Your help. I choose to be released to You all the baggage I have been carrying and the associated trauma. I want to be free from these burdens so I can enter into a new life with You. Please help me! Amen

LEAVING SHAME BEHIND

God says we are precious in His sight. God, through Jesus, has provided a way for us to leave shame behind and live in honour and dignity, regardless of what has happened in our past. Believing and speaking the truth of God's word to ourselves will break the power of evil to keep us in bondage to the past. This will also open the door to living in the blessing of the good gifts and plans that God has for us. All God's promises are YES for us who belong to Jesus.

Let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ's blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water. Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! (Hebrews 10:22, 2 Corinthians 5:17 NLT)

It's not easy to let go of powerful lies that have impeded our well-being for some time but God will give us the power to do so if we will follow His instructions and act on His written Word. If we are holding anything back, it's time to confess it to God and receive His grace and power to overcome.

My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness. So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. I become righteous through faith in Christ. For God's way of making us right with himself depends on faith. (2 Corinthians 12:9, Philippians 3:9b NLT)

Those who live with shame often run to isolation when they feel threatened. God calls us to overcome shame by proclaiming the truth that Jesus bore our shame on the cross so we could be free from it. When we want to run away because we feel threatened, our best choice is to stay. The shame we feel because of past events may be blocking us from talking with a trustworthy individual, but the only way to find real freedom is to get it all out and proclaim the truth that will set us free.

Instead of shame and dishonor, you will enjoy a double share of honor.

Isaiah 61:7a NLT

Heavenly Father, forgive me for running to isolation, addiction, and destructive actions when I felt ashamed rather than calling on You for help. Thank You that Jesus died on the cross for me, so I could be forgiven, cleansed, healed, and made whole. Help me to focus my thoughts on truth and not react to my feelings. When I feel like running or isolating, please strengthen me to remain and seek out healthy people with whom I can be honest about what is going on. I am forever grateful that You continue to love and care for me. Amen

HALFWAY IS BETTER THAN HALF MEASURES

Although we know that "*half measures avail us nothing*," it's also wonderful to have the promise that, "*If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through.*" (Big Book, pg 83-84)

We are not required to live a perfect life, just to make a sincere effort to do things God's way. As we do, we will experience that Big Book promise. The promises God makes will also be fulfilled, some quickly, and others more slowly, but in His perfect timing. In addition, when the going gets tough, the experience strength and hope that others share will encourage us and give us hope.

We will be amazed before we are halfway through.

This is the reason we do not give up. Our human body is wearing out. But our spirits are getting stronger every day. The little troubles we suffer now for a short time are making us ready for the great things God is going to give us forever. We do not look at the things that can be seen. We look at the things that cannot be seen. The things that can be seen will come to an end. But the things that cannot be seen will last forever. (2 Corinthians 4:16-18 NLV)

The significant changes in our being take place deep within our souls where we are unable to see them. Our part is to consciously give ourselves over to the care of God and follow the established principles that have worked for many who have walked this path before us. It is only as time passes that we notice things have changed in ways that amaze us. We find peace and stability that we never knew before. Solutions to problems present themselves. We become more and more conscious of God being with us and supporting us each step of the way.

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. (Deuteronomy 31:6 NIV)

Thankfully we don't have to wait until Step 12 has been completed to experience all these wonderful gifts. Most of the time, when we commit to doing the next right thing, we will notice that change in us has already taken place.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I'm so grateful that You are with me today, working change in the deep places of my soul as I follow Your ways wholeheartedly. Please help me to constantly live in hope and bravely do the next right thing in each situation I encounter. Amen

COMPASSION

When we observe someone in need of help what is our first reaction? Are we a person with genuine compassion who seeks to help another, or do we just want to know what is going on with no sincere interest in helping? In the Bible we are told many times that Jesus had compassion on the crowds or on a person in need and He stopped to help them.

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. (Matthew 9:35-36 NIV)

Jesus told a story about a person who was robbed and injured on a dangerous road. Two people looked at his near dead body lying on the roadside but went on their way without doing anything to help. Then a person who was not of the man's ethnic background came by and took care of him. He even put the injured man on his own donkey and took him to an inn where he paid the innkeeper to take care of him until the man was well.

By chance a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. A Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side. Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. (Luke 10:31-33 NLT)

When Jesus looked on us in our life in addiction, He had compassion on us, pursued us with His love and brought us to our Heavenly Father. When we came into Now it is time for us to do as Jesus says, "Go and do the same."

Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. (1 Peter 3:8 NIV)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, Please help me to love and be compassionate to those I meet along the way as You and others have loved and shown compassion towards me. Amen

Are we a person with genuine compassion who seeks to help another?

SPEAKING WITH HONOUR -- NO MORE SWEARING

What does speaking honourably have to do with recovery? So, what if I swear? So, what if I tell off-colour jokes? To live in recovery is to live as respectful people, honouring God and those God loves. How does my speech reflect this?

You must not misuse the name of the Lord your God. The Lord will not let you go unpunished if you misuse his name. Our Father in heaven, may your name be honored. (Deuteronomy 5:11, Matthew 6:9 NLT)

To live in recovery is to live as respectful people, honouring God and those God loves. How does my speech reflect this?

When they don't like what is happening around them many people will react with words such as, "Oh for God's sake" or "Jesus Christ". In that setting, when these names are spoken, there really isn't a desire for God or His will or to honour Jesus' name above all names. It is a disrespectful misuse of these names.

The names of God reflect His reputation and demonstrate His character in all that He says and does. Each time we pray the Lord's Prayer we are committing ourselves to upholding God's name with reverence and using it with respect. In the same way that we would not appreciate people saying and doing things in our name, especially things we do not approve of, we should not invoke God's name in things He would not approve of.

I bow before your holy Temple as I worship. I praise your name for your unfailing love and faithfulness; for your promises are backed by all the honor of your name. (Psalm 138:2 NLT)

Many of us would rather not swear but we get careless and the words are out of our mouth before we even think. It's time to both think and speak with honour about the God who loved and cared for us even when we didn't care for ourselves. God sent His beloved son Jesus into the world to die for our sins so that we might be made right with Him and live forever with Him in heaven. We need to think about what causes us to carelessly misuse the name of this awesome God of unfailing love.

Prayer. Our Father in heaven, may your name be honored on my lips today and every day. Help me to cease speaking careless words and instead honour You in all my ways. Amen

WELCOMING FRIENDSHIP IN RECOVERY

Some of us slid into destructive and addictive lifestyles out of a desire to belong and have friends. We longed to be known and supported. We wanted to matter to someone. We longed to have people around us who would enrich our lives by just being together with them. The ongoing pain of loneliness, even in recovery, is a challenge to maintaining sobriety. Thankfully, through His word, God gives us instruction on how to build lasting friendships.

One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend. (Proverbs 18:24 NIV, Proverbs 27:17 NLT)

Healthy friendships are characterized by mutual respect and sharing. They are based on love, caring, and interest in the wellbeing of each other. Friends discuss God's word, pray for each other, and build each other up. They laugh, they weep, they mourn, and they rejoice with each other depending on the season of life. They share their experience, strength, and hope with each other whenever they talk together. When it's appropriate they even hold each other accountable.

Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. (John 15:13-15 NIV)

To live well the life God created us to live it's good to ask ourselves, "How am I being a friend?" "How am I welcoming the presence of healthy friends into my daily life?"

Prayer. Thank You God for the opportunity I have been given to be a friend and to welcome friendship with others. Teach me how to do that well as You restore me to life and a relationship with You and others that I was created to enjoy. Amen

As we come out of the isolation of addiction and move into the life God created us to live it's good to ask ourselves, "How am I being a friend?"