

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY

Daily Meditations



OCTOBER 2025

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:

www.partnersinhope.ca/meditations

You can also view our daily video blog at:

<http://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.*

For more recovery resources

Visit us at <http://www.partnersinhope.ca>

or write to us at:

Partners in Hope Recovery Society
1906 – 615 Belmont Street, New Westminster, BC
V3M 6A1

Email: phirecovery@gmail.com
Phone or text: 604-215-0335

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.

SUBSTANCE ADDICTIONS:	BEHAVIOUR ADDICTIONS:
Alcohol Caffeine Injected or smoked substances such as: Crack, Crystal Meth, Heroin Marijuana Prescription Medications Sugar Tobacco	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)
SOFT ADDICTIONS:	RELATIONSHIP ADDICTIONS:
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	Abusive Relationships: Includes: Intimidation, Isolation, Domination, Blaming, Humiliation, Withholding, Forcing acts against one's will Approval dependency Attention Seeking Codependence/Rescuing Power/Control

PRAYER: FOR HEALING AND RESTORATION

Loving God, Thank You for rescuing me from the dark power of Satan and bringing me into loving relationship with Your Son, Jesus. I ask for wisdom and understanding from Your 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 we I dare ask or imagine. Amen



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CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Evelyn Leeburn, Elsie Quick

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PHOTOS

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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.

CREATIVITY

While "The Night Watch," a masterpiece by the painter Rembrandt, was being restored, and the public was invited to view the procedure and give feedback on the restoration process. All of us in recovery are like the people depicted in that painting we have been stained by the world around us. Each one of us requires individual attention as we are being restored to the person God created us to be.

Know that the Lord is God. He made us, and we belong to him. We are his people. We are the sheep belonging to his flock. (Psalm 100:3 NIRV)

As toddlers we likely did small things that brought delight to those around us. As the years went on, we got stained by events that happened to us and around us. In addition, who we were created to be got taken over by the person we became in our addictive lifestyle. God gave each of us creative ability, but it got lost behind the protectionist screen we put up. Perhaps we can paint or play an instrument or sing or excel at a sport or build a house or use some other skill we have been given. God has a purpose for each of us on this earth and we can expect that the purpose will show itself during the recovery process.

The Lord has given them special skills as engravers, designers, embroiderers in blue, purple, and scarlet thread on fine linen cloth, and weavers. They excel as craftsmen and as designers. (Exodus 35:35 NLT)

The public who viewed the restoration of the painting were invited to give input on its progress. In our recovery we have people around us who are willing to share their experience, strength and hope with us. Being creative is a God given ability because each of us is made in God's image. God's desire is that we discover His original plan for our lives and allow Him to fully restore the person He created us to be.

The Lord will work out his plans for my life — for your faithful love, O Lord, endures forever. Don't abandon me, for you made me. (Psalm 138:8 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, When I look around, I am amazed by the work of Your hands. Please restore me to be the person You created me to be, so that I might take my rightful place in Your creative plan. Amen

***Being
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a God
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image.***

LOOK UP AND LEARN

Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord from the heavens. Praise him in the heavens above. Praise him, all his angels. Praise him, all his angels in heaven. Praise him, sun and moon. Praise him, all you shining stars. Praise him, you highest heavens. Praise him, you waters above the skies. Let all of them praise the name of the Lord, because at his command they were created. He established them for ever and ever. He gave them laws they will always have to obey. (Psalm 148: 1-6 NIRV)

The person who wrote this Psalm was so amazed by all that he saw in the heavens above that he called out for everything to praise the Lord. Why should the heavens praise the Lord? The Psalmist says because they were created at God's command and are established forever. The earth orbits the sun, and the moon reflects the light of the sun. The stars light up the heavens.

The Bible indicates that there are three heavens, and God resides in the highest heaven from where He rules over the heavens and the earth. When humans on earth send rockets or astronauts in capsules into space, they travel through outer space which is known as the Stellar Heaven. Humans reside on earth in the Atmospheric Heaven. Elements in the heavens follow their assigned natural laws which permit humans, animals, and fish to thrive here on Earth.

I know a man in Christ who was taken up to the third heaven. This happened 14 years ago. I don't know if the man was in his body or out of his body, but God knows. (2 Corinthians 12:2 ERV)

God in His wisdom gave us a book containing His laws for life. It is called the Bible. He also put within humankind a moral code to live by. Can we assume that if we obey God's laws our lives will be much better than if we try to manage things on our own? Who do you believe knows best, the creator or the created?

Prayer: Loving God, You really are an amazing creator. Help me to be obedient to Your laws and live life to the full as You intended. Amen

HIDING BEHIND A MASK

Tomorrow night many children put on costumes and go door-to-door "trick-or-treating." Some of them wear masks to complete their costume. Many adults also dress in costumes at their workplace and later in the evening may attend parties where a mask is used to disguise who they really are. Everyone wants to have a good time as they pretend to be someone they are not for a few hours.

Truth is, many of us don't just don masks on Halloween. Sometimes we have worn masks for so long that we forget who we really are. A mask, of course, covers the truth of who we truly are with a lie. When we live behind a mask, we are denying our true self and rejecting the person God created us to be.

You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. (Psalm 139:13-14 NLT)

of our false persona.

God created us in love with a purpose for our lives. God invites us to allow our unique personality to complement each of our relationships, and everything else we undertake to do. This is what life with God in recovery is all about, becoming the person God created us to be and following the plan He has for our lives. When we dare to take off the mask and let our true self be known, we often experience freedom from the burden

The question for each of us is, do we want to remove the mask and find out who we truly are, or do we want to continue telling lies and hiding behind the mask of a false persona?

What this adds up to, then, is this: no more lies, no more pretense. Tell your neighbor the truth. In Christ's body we're all connected to each other, after all. When you lie to others, you end up lying to yourself. (Ephesians 4:25 MSG)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, from this day forward I commit to letting go of everything that hinders me from becoming the person You created me to be. Help me to tell the truth in every circumstance and leave the outcome with You. Amen

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HOPE IN JESUS

There is an account in the Bible of ten men who were lepers. They were from different areas of the country and normally would not have associated with one another because of cultural prejudice. Somehow, they must have heard of Jesus healing a leper and that gave them hope that Jesus might also heal them. They gathered at a place where they thought they would see Jesus passing by on his way to Jerusalem.

Lord, you hear the desires of those who are hurting. You cheer them up and give them hope. You listen to their cries. (Psalm 10:17 NIRV)

Often in our addictive lifestyle we gathered with people who were in the same position as we were. We lost all hope of recovering from the dependency that kept us in bondage, so we formed an existence with those who were just like us. Maybe at some point we heard about someone who had given their will and life over to the care of God and who managed to turn their life around, and this gave us hope that perhaps we could do the same. Perhaps it is time for us to get to a place where we can meet with Jesus.

If we have hope, perhaps it is time to get to a place where we can meet with Jesus.

I love those who love me; And those who diligently seek me will find me. (Proverbs 8:17 NASB)

In the account of what happened with the lepers, Jesus did not immediately heal them, He told them to go show themselves to the priest. On the way they were cleansed of the disease but only one of the ten returned to give thanks and praise to God for the healing. This one man, in returning to glorify God for his healing, received more than just physical healing. He received complete wholeness and salvation.

Jesus said, "Were not ten healed? Where are the nine? Can none be found to come back and give glory to God except this outsider?" Then he said to him, "Get up. On your way. Your faith has healed and saved you." (John 17:17-19 MSG)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I praise and thank You for giving me hope to live a sober life. I now ask You to cleanse, heal and restore me to wholeness in body, mind, and spirit. Amen

THE SLAVERY OF ADDICTION

Anyone who has lived in addiction knows that their life's focus was on the thing they sought after to satisfy their cravings. We were in bondage and slaves to our desires. Even though we did as we wanted, when we wanted, life was painful. The thing we once pursued to give us pleasure, ultimately dominated us. Darkness and chaos in life that we never could have imagined became our reality.

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. (Galatians 5:1 NIV)

In our despair we admitted that we were powerless over our dependency and began to look around for freedom from the ugliness of daily life. In our quest for freedom, we came to believe that there must be a power greater than ourselves that could restore us to sanity. Jesus said He was sent to earth for that very reason.

The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. (Luke 4:18-19 NIV)

When a person is free, they can come and go as they please. A slave cannot. A slave must be obedient to his or her master, otherwise the slave lives in fear of what the master might do to them. In the same way, persons living in addiction are bound by the desperation of what they are craving. Thankfully, Jesus came to set slaves free.

If we turn away from whatever is holding us in captivity, and surrender our lives including our cravings to God, we will have hope and freedom today. All power in heaven and earth has been given to Jesus. He is the One who purchased our freedom from every shackle that would seek to keep us in bondage.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, Thank You for coming to earth to purchase my freedom from sin. Help me to stand firm in Your truth and no longer allow the bondage of sin to make me a slave. Amen

If we turn away from whatever is holding us in captivity, and surrender our lives including our cravings to God, we will have hope and freedom today.

EVERYDAY WISDOM

Every time we pray the serenity prayer we are asking God for wisdom. What is wisdom? Why should we want it? What do we do with it once we get it? Wisdom is the ability to think and act wisely based on information, experience, and common sense.

The book of Proverbs in the Bible has 31 chapters of short sayings which express useful truths for everyday life. Some folks find it helpful to read one section each day — usually the section that corresponds to the day of the month. So, on this 4th day of the month, what can we learn from Proverbs 4 to help us think and act wisely?

Carefully guard your thoughts because they are the source of true life. Never tell lies or be deceitful in what you say. Keep looking straight ahead, without turning aside. Know where you are headed, and you will stay on solid ground. Don't make a mistake by turning to the right or the left. (Proverbs 4:23-27 CEV)

Someone has echoed these thoughts in a well-known poem:- *Watch your thoughts; they become words. Watch your words; they become actions. Watch your actions; they become habits. Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.* (Author Unknown)

We need God's Spirit living in us, so we can recognize what wisdom looks like.

Wanting to be wise is not enough. We need God's Holy Spirit living in us to help us recognize what wisdom looks like. When we consult with and obey the Holy Spirit in the life situations we face each day, we will gain from His wisdom and have the power to live life in a new way.

We have received God's Spirit (not the world's spirit), so we can know the wonderful things God has freely given us. We speak words given to us by the Spirit, using the Spirit's words to explain spiritual truths. But people who aren't spiritual can't receive these truths from God's Spirit. It all sounds foolish to them and they can't understand it, for only those who are spiritual can understand what the Spirit means. (1 Corinthians 2:12-14 NLT)

Prayer: Lord Jesus, come and live in me today and help me to be a wise person. Help me to understand what is right and good in every situation I face. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit and strengthen me to obey Your principles in all I say and do. Amen

DON'T WORRY ABOUT TOMORROW

Some of the most welcome phrases in life and certainly in recovery circles are, "One day at a time" or "Just for today." These are principles that are meant to lighten the heavy burden we carry about our past actions and our unknown future so that it is more bearable for us to deal with today in a realistic way. These sayings are ways to uphold and express the teaching of Jesus.

So don't worry about tomorrow. Each day has enough trouble of its own. Tomorrow will have its own worries. (Matthew 6:34 ERV)

The above words can be found in the most famous record of Jesus' teaching called, "The Sermon on the Mount." Jesus had just been speaking about some of the things we worry about — money, clothes, food etc. — and He encouraged His followers to believe that God cared for them and would provide for their needs. Jesus used examples of birds and flowers to remind us of how much attention to detail we can expect from our gracious God.

Instead of worrying, Jesus says we should seek God and His plan for each day and then do what God says. If we do, we can trust God to take care of everything else.

What you should want most is God's kingdom and doing what he wants you to do. Then he will give you all these other things you need. (Matthew 6:33 ERV)

We are not encouraged to live in denial and bury our heads in the sand. There are things we need to deal with each day and not all of them will be easy. But, if we seek Him, God will meet our needs and at the end of the day we too will have examples of God's faithful care and guidance to share.

As we learn to live one day at a time, it is essential that we come to God with a willingness and intention to surrender our will and life to His care. Because God knows best how to help us mature in our faith He may stretch us beyond our comfort zone in certain situations, but He will never give us more than we can handle.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Your Word tells me not to worry about my life or the things of tomorrow. Forgive me for my lack of confidence in Your ability to work everything together for my good. Please help me to deal with those things I can and make any necessary changes, and leave those things I cannot change in Your care. Amen

OCTOBER 28

DON'T EVEN KNOW I AM LYING

Our default position when facing past problems was to live in denial that they even existed. It's only natural to assume that as we face problems in our recovery, we will be prone to denial once again. Dealing with anger, shame, and hurtful relationships can make us vulnerable to our continued use of denial.

The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is? But I, the Lord, search all hearts and examine secret motives. (Jeremiah 17:9-10a NLT)

It's so easy to blame others for problems we currently experience. We are accustomed to minimizing our issues and find it difficult to be vulnerable and honest in admitting what is truly going on. In recovery, we now find ourselves acting in the same way when faced with frustration and failure. Angry reactions and heated arguments indicate that denial is still fueling our thinking. We make excuses for our behaviour and hope the reasons we give will be enough to avoid taking any necessary action.

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting. (Psalm 139:23-24 NIV)

Today is another opportunity to deepen our awareness of how denial continues to affect us and to invite God to bring about positive change. A simple inventory might include questions like:—What denial techniques do I use to maintain the lie that I don't have a problem? In what way do I allow God to search me and name any thoughts, motives, or behaviours that are offensive to Him? What do I do with what God reveals? What action do I need to take so I can live in the freedom that God promises?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I confess that my heart is deceitful. Forgive me for the times I have sought to escape responsibility for my actions through denial. Fill me with the courage and strength I need so that I can change my ways and do what is necessary to live honestly and deal with what is true. Amen

***Dealing with
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OCTOBER 5

DON'T JUST TALK THE TALK BUT WALK THE WALK

When we were trapped in our own personal hell and in bondage to the substance that medicated us, we called out to God. He heard us and set us free. We were grateful to receive forgiveness for our sin and the power of the Holy Spirit to enable us to live the life we always wanted. We were excited to set out on our new journey.

We never stop thanking God for the way you received his word. You heard it from us. But you didn't accept it as a human word. You accepted it for what it really is. It is God's word. It is really at work in you who believe. (1 Thessalonians 2:13 NIRV)

The joy of meeting Jesus, our new friend who desires the very best for us, was like having our cake and eating it too. However, as the days and weeks went by, we began to miss the old familiar lifestyle. We started to grumble like the children of Israel whom God had released from slavery in Egypt. On their journey to freedom, they missed some things that were available in Egypt and began to view slavery with their wants met as better than freedom.

If we are to walk the walk of life with God in recovery, we need to be willing to persevere through the rough country of learning to do things God's way rather than doing things our way. God is with us and will see us through every obstacle we may encounter, but we need to determine to stay the course even when the going gets tough.

Whoever hears these teachings of mine and obeys them is like a wise man who built his house on rock. It rained hard, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house. But it did not fall because it was built on rock. (Matthew 7:24-25 ERV)

In recovery, we can't just talk the talk, we need to have patience and the know-how to walk the walk. God will strengthen us to make the journey, but we need to be willing to surrender to His ways.

Heavenly Father, I don't just want to talk the talk of recovery, I want to walk the walk. With Your help and guidance, I can sustain the life I desire to live without looking back. Please help me! Amen

***We can't
just talk
the talk;
we need
to have
patience
and the
know-
how to
walk the
walk.***

CREATING OUR SELF-IMAGE

Understanding the relationship between self-image and addiction is like a chicken and egg situation – trying to interpret which came first. Some of us tried to cover up for our low self-image by using alcohol or drugs. For others addiction contributed to our low self-image as we tried to deal with the guilt and shame of our unmanageable life. The Bible says God knows all about us and planned our time of birth and where we would live. Do we factor this into our self-image?

From one man he made all the people of the world. Now they live all over the earth. He decided exactly when they should live. And he decided exactly where they should live. (Acts 17:26 NIRV)

For all of us, our self-image should be based on why we exist at all. Do we believe that we are made in the image of God? Do we believe that God knew us before we were born and had a plan for us? The Bible tells us the story of Joseph who was rejected by his brothers because he was his father's favourite. To get rid of him they sold him as a slave and Joseph ended up in Egypt.

Then he sent someone to Egypt ahead of them—Joseph, who was sold as a slave. They bruised his feet with fetters and placed his neck in an iron collar. Until the time came to fulfill his dreams, the Lord tested Joseph's character. (Psalm 105:17-19 NLT)

Joseph's self-image must have changed as he went from being the favourite son in the family to being a slave. But God used Joseph's time as a slave to test his character. After many years Joseph's life turned around and he became second in command in the land of Egypt. How might this have impacted Joseph's self-image?

You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. (Genesis 50:20a NLT)

Just like Joseph, our self-image will change with life's circumstances as we allow God to direct our ways. As we grow in His grace, we too will be able to acknowledge that our self-image reflects God's plan for us.

Prayer: Gracious God, Thank You that You work my past, my present, and my future together for my good and for Your glory. Amen

SPEAKING TO GOD IN PRAYER

When we first come into recovery many of us are intimidated by the thought of speaking to God in prayer. Often, we are not even sure that there is a God who listens and responds to us. How do we get faith to believe that God really does exist and hears and answers our prayers?

You can never please God without faith, without depending on him. Anyone who wants to come to God must believe that there is a God and that he rewards those who sincerely look for him. (Hebrews 11:6 TLB)

We do not find it difficult to believe the wind is real whether it is a gentle breeze or a hurricane. We cannot see the wind, but we see the effects of it as it moves. All around us we see the beauty of God's creation. Earth's plant life obeys God and grows in the appointed season. Oceans, sky, birds and animals all exhibit His creative beauty and power. With this evidence, the only reason we would not believe God exists is that we have chosen by an act of our will not to.

Jesus, while on earth, often went off on His own to pray to His Heavenly Father. In this action, Jesus demonstrated that for us to live life on this earth according to the will of God, we must continuously seek God's input into our lives.

We will experience the truth that God exists when we do what He says. God invites us to give our will and life over to His care and if we do, He promises to be our Heavenly Father. We become His precious children. As we bring our problems to Him and experience His response to our needs, we will find that God does exactly what He says He will do.

And when we obey him, every path he guides us on is fragrant with his loving-kindness and his truth. Pray all the time. Ask God for anything in line with the Holy Spirit's wishes. Plead with him, reminding him of your needs, and keep praying earnestly for all Christians everywhere. (Psalm 25:10; Ephesians 6:18 TLB)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I choose by an act of my will to have faith in You. Please hear and answer my sincere prayers as I look to You for guidance. Amen

Often, we are not even sure that there is a God who listens and responds to us.

OCTOBER 26

GRIEF AND LOSS

In 1969, psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross introduced what became known as the “five stages of grief.” This is a list of the feelings those who have faced death and tragedy seem to face. Based on her years of working with terminal cancer patients, Kübler-Ross composed the following pattern of phases many people experience:

- Denial: “This can’t be happening to me.”
- Anger: “Why is this happening? Who is to blame?”
- Bargaining: “Make this not happen, and in return I will ____.”
- Depression: “I’m too sad to do anything.”
- Acceptance: “I’m at peace with what has happened.”

Even though we may be aware of these stages and able to identify with where we are today, it still remains difficult for us to deal with the grief and loss we may experience. A seemingly insignificant loss may unexpectedly trigger overwhelming emotions from other occasions of loss.

***You who
are my
Comforter
in sorrow,
my heart
is faint
within
me.***

Thank God He is with us through every stage of life, and He understands our grief. He has experienced it all Himself.

He was hated and men would have nothing to do with Him, a man of sorrows and suffering, knowing sadness well. But you, God, see the trouble of the afflicted; you consider their grief and take it in hand. The victims commit themselves to you; you are the helper of the fatherless. (Isaiah 53:3 NLV, Psalm 10:14 NIV)

***Jeremiah 8:18
NIV***

Not only has God experienced grief and sorrow but He pays attention to what we are going through because He loves us and wants to tenderly comfort us through our difficult times.

Our emotions may go up and down, but God’s love and care is forever constant. Each day we have an opportunity to bring our sorrows to God for His comfort and care. God will not condemn us for the feelings we have but will support, comfort and encourage us for as long as it takes to regain our strength to carry on. That is the kind of caring God He is.

My soul is weary with sorrow; strengthen me according to your word. (Psalm 119:28 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You alone totally understand what I’m going through. When my heart is heavy with grief and loss help me to turn to You for Your comfort and support. Amen

OCTOBER 7

OPINIONS

Many people think they know a lot but over time most have been proved wrong in some area of their knowledge. How wise of the founders of AA to take the position that AA would have no opinion on outside issues so the AA name would not be drawn into public controversy. God’s word also encourages us to think twice about sharing our opinions.

Fools find no pleasure in understanding but delight in airing their own opinions.
(Proverb 18:2 NIV)

It’s not wrong to have an opinion. We all need to think and wonder about things and form our thoughts around God’s truth, but we all need to remember that we are on a journey in our minds as well as in every other area of our life. We are being transformed and that means that some of the opinions we hold today may not be those we hold in 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 and you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect. (Romans 12:2 NIV)

The core of our thinking should be solidly based on God’s Word but in many areas of life it takes time for clarity to come in how we might respond to certain issues or groups. Where God’s Word is clear and we have held a different opinion, we need to accept what God says and change our minds to reflect the truth. At the same time, we need to respect where others are on their journey and might hold differing opinions from us at this point in time.

Let us stop judging one another. Instead, decide not to put anything in the way of a brother or sister. Don’t put anything in their way that would make them trip and fall. (Romans 14:13 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I welcome You to show me Your will today. Help me to believe what is right in Your eyes and make any necessary changes to my thinking. Also give me grace to live with respect for others who currently differ with me in their ideas and opinions. Amen

***Accept the
person
whose faith
is weak.
Don’t argue
with them
where you
have
differences
of opinion.***

***(Romans 14:1
NIV)***

STEP THREE – NO HOLDING BACK

Turning our will and life over to the care of God as we understand Him is the starting point of our new life with God in recovery. We have much to learn but, as we wholeheartedly seek to know God's principles for life as recorded in the Bible, He will give us discernment to do what is right in all our affairs.

Yes, if you cry out for discernment and lift up your voice for understanding; if you seek her as silver and search for her as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. (Proverbs 2:3-5 NKJV)

When we give our will and life over to the care of God and repent of our sins, nothing should be held back. Holding back means we are not fully committed to the cleansing process of the blood of Jesus. This mindset will keep us sitting on the fence with one foot in our past life and one foot in our new life. To move on we need both feet on the path of righteous living in the Power of the Holy Spirit, the Power who is greater than ourselves. If we knowingly hold back anything, we are not supporting the decision we are making and are leaving ourselves open to relapse.

Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do. (James 1:7-8 NLT)

God supports a pure heart even when our decision might be a timid one. As we truly desire to follow Him, God will encourage us and work on our behalf to bring restoration and healing to those places that have been broken. It is not in our own power to amend who we are. That is only done by the Power greater than ourselves. He's the one who restores us to a good, pleasing, and perfect life.

Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you. (2 Corinthians 13:11 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I give my will and life fully into Your care. Please continue Your renewing work in every part of my being until I am perfected in You. Amen

FACE TO FACE WITH THE STATE OF OUR HEART

The following words were written by King David after he had allowed his lust for a woman to lead him down the path of sexual immorality and murder. It would appear he asked for sacrificial blood to be sprinkled on him, so that he could be made clean before God.

Sprinkle me with hyssop, then I will be clean. Wash me, then I will be whiter than snow. Let me hear you say, "Your sins are forgiven." That will bring me joy and gladness. Let the body you have broken be glad. Take away all my sins. Wipe away all the evil things I've done. God, create a pure heart in me. Give me a new spirit that is faithful to you. Don't send me away from you. Don't take your Holy Spirit away from me. Give me back the joy that comes from being saved by you. Give me a spirit that obeys you so that I will keep going. (Psalm 51:7-12 NIRV)

David did not acknowledge all that he had done until he was confronted by the prophet Nathan. Like us, he just kept going until he was brought face to face with the state of his own heart. When making a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves, many of us are horrified by the things we have done. Who or what brought us to that place where we admitted we were powerless over our dependencies and our lives were unmanageable?

Like David, did we call out to God to wipe away all the evil things we have done? In His mercy, God waits for us to turn from sin and turn our will and life over to His care. David asked to be given a new spirit that was faithful to God, so that he could have the joy that comes from being saved by God. When we repent and give our lives over to God, He gives us His Holy Spirit to be with us and to live in us. The Holy Spirit teaches us God's ways and strengthens us to be faithful to all His principles. With the Spirit greater than ourselves working in us we have the power to obey God and keep going forward in our new life in recovery.

Take away all my sins. Wipe away all the evil things I've done. God, create a pure heart in me.

Psalm 51:9-10 NIRV

Prayer: Gracious God, I pray for the knowledge of Your will for my new life and the Power to carry it out. Thank You that as I move forward in recovery I can rely on Your Holy Spirit to guide me and help me obey Your principles in all my affairs. Amen

AVOIDING EVIL

Most of us would agree that evil is the opposite of good. It may also be helpful to think of evil as the absence of good. We live in a mixed-up world where people mix good and evil for their own purposes, and it is hard to know what really is evil and what is good. That is why it is so valuable to have God's Word in the Bible to help us sort out what is truly evil, and then choose to do good.

Good people are honest and fair in all they do, but those who are evil lie and cannot be trusted. Evil people use their words to hurt others, but the words from good people can save others from danger. The wicked are trapped by their foolish words, but good people escape from such trouble. (Proverbs 12:5-6, 13 ERV)

Stop doing anything evil and do good. Look for peace and do all you can to help people live peacefully.

Psalm 34:14 ERV

God says that when we lie, we are acting in an evil way. The same is true when we speak angry, mean, and hurtful words to another. We need to regularly consult with God to sort out what is foolish and what is helpful, or we will find ourselves trapped in trouble we create.

In the Bible, God gives us many examples of good and evil behaviour, and He does this so we can learn how to be safe as we follow His ways. Our task is to learn from these examples and put God's proven ways into practice in all our affairs. People who practice evil end up with lots of trouble but those who work for good find peace and happiness.

People who work for evil make trouble, but those who plan for peace bring happiness. The Lord will keep good people safe, but evil people will have many troubles. (Proverb 12:20-21 ERV)

Knowing the difference between good and evil and making a choice for good is not always easy or convenient but, if we ask Him, God will help us to make the right choice.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to avoid doing evil things by practicing what You say is right and good. Give me the willingness to pursue good and turn away from evil. I acknowledge Your Presence ever with me and Your guidance in all I do. My desire is to avoid evil and help others so that all of us can live peacefully together. Amen

LONGING FOR SECURITY

I cling to you; your strong right hand holds me securely. (Psalm 63:8 NLT)

As humans we have a need for security in many forms, security within our own family, security about who we are inside our own heads, security of our position within a group, security in having a place to call home, security from any type of threat to our physical body, and any other thing we may see as a threat to our well-being. Lack of anything we consider essential, makes us feel insecure. Many of us used drugs and alcohol to cover up or compensate for our feelings of insecurity.

What a great relief to learn in recovery circles that security is not provided by our circumstances, but by God alone. With this understanding we can learn how to live in the security of God's care.

Wealth and honor come from you alone, for you rule over everything. Power and might are in your hand, and at your discretion people are made great and given strength. (1 Chronicles 29:12 NLT)

When we put our faith in Jesus' death on the cross to pay the penalty for our sin and in His subsequent resurrection to life because death could not hold Him, we become children of God. We can live confidently each day as God's children and sleep peacefully each night in the certain knowledge that we are safe and secure in the care of our Heavenly Father.

I lift up my eyes to the mountains—where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip—he who watches over you will not slumber; indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. for he views the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens. (Psalm 121:1-4; Job 28:24 NIV)

Perhaps it's time to stop trying to find security in our addictive substances and relationships and choose to find our security in the One whom God sent into the world to pay the debt of our sin so we might have life forevermore with Him.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, As I journey with You in recovery, help me to keep my eyes firmly fixed on You, for You alone are the source of my security. Amen

Security is not provided by our circumstances, but by God alone.

STAYING CONNECTED

Trying to stay connected and maintain a close and healthy relationship with anyone is impossible in active addiction. Only our substance of choice had our full attention. In recovery, God invites us to choose for the plan He has for us to live in a loving relationship with Him and with others. Jesus prayed about this long ago, echoing what God's heart was for all of us from the beginning of creation:

I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me. (John 17:21 NLT)

Staying connected means coming close to another person and allowing ourselves to become involved in their lives. We do not hide. We joyfully communicate our thoughts and feelings to someone with whom we feel accepted and safe and find ways to get to know that person. We want to be known and to share our lives with others.

And this is the way to have eternal life—to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the one you sent to earth. (John 17:3 NLT)

Jesus left heaven to come to earth so we would know the depth of God's love for us. As we read God's Word as recorded in the Bible, we will get to know God's gracious heart towards us and learn His ways for a good life when we obey what He says works

and avoid what He says will harm us.

I can do nothing alone. I judge only the way I am told. And my judgment is right, because I am not trying to please myself. I want only to please the one who sent me. (John 5:30 ERV)

Are we willing to live connected to God today? What would it take for us to only do those things that were on God's heart for us to do? The truth is, we have no life outside of this connection to God through Jesus. This step-by-step, moment-by-moment, connection with God is the only way we will overcome our addiction and maintain sobriety.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, please heal my heart and help me to respond to Your kind invitation to live close to You each day and follow Your ways in all I say and do. Amen

STEP EIGHT – THE HEALING LIST

For most of us, compiling a list of people we have harmed and becoming willing to make amends to them is extremely intimidating. When we think of some of the past events in our lives, we are not proud of the interactions that took place. This step urges us to deal with the harm we have caused rather than fretting over the situation and keeping it buried deep in our souls. Healing takes place when we strip away the excuses and look at the event in the light of God's love.

Dear friends, let us practice loving each other, for love comes from God and those who are loving and kind show that they are the children of God, and that they are getting to know him better. But if a person isn't loving and kind, it shows that he doesn't know God — for God is love. (1 John 4:7-8 TLB)

How can we get to that place where we can envision ourselves making amends to those we have harmed? Through Jesus, God made a way for everything that was blocking a loving relationship with Him to be removed. In the safety of His love and forgiveness, it is now our turn to take responsibility for breakdowns in relationships and do whatever we can to remove barriers that divide us from others.

So, what if you are offering your gift at the altar and remember that someone has something against you? Leave your gift there and go make peace with that person. Then come and offer your gift. (Matthew 5:23-24 ERV)

When we come to that place where we are willing to make amends, we need to seek help from those who have completed this step before us and ask for their wisdom in choosing the right approach. In all of this we need to remember that God is with us and will help us.

Call to me and I will answer you. I'll tell you marvelous and wondrous things that you could never figure out on your own. (Jeremiah 33:3 MSG)

Prayer: Loving God, You know the people I need to make amends to, so please help me be considerate and choose the right time and the right place to make peace with each person. Thank You for providing wise people I can consult with as I move forward. Help me to humbly accept Your input and the input of others and put it into practice. Amen

DO GOOD TO THOSE WHO HATE YOU – REALLY?

Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. Ask God to bless the people who ask for bad things to happen to you. Pray for the people who are mean to you. If you do this, you will have a great reward. You will be children of the Most High God. God is good even to the people who are full of sin and not thankful. Give love and mercy the same as your Father gives love and mercy. (Luke 6:27b-28, 35b-36 ERV)

We begin today's meditation with Jesus' words – perhaps some of the most challenging ever. It takes great courage and endurance to love someone who is a hard-to-love person with character defects that irritate us. It seems almost impossible to love them when their shortcomings have injured us and perhaps continue to inflict harm on us when we are around them. We don't want to be co-dependent and allow those who harm us to continue to do so. Neither do we want to be people who are filled with resentment and hate because we know that is poison for us. So, how are we to respond today to what Jesus is saying?

***Ask God to
bless the
people
who ask
for bad
things to
happen to
you.***

Luke 6:28 ERV

It is true in every situation, if we seek God first, the rest will fall into place. God loved us even when we were full of sin. He sorted who we were from what we did. He never condoned our bad behaviour. He simply showed us grace and invited us to accept His love. God sent Jesus into the world to pay the penalty for our sins so that our relationship with Him could be restored. He then waited for us to realize the error of our ways and repent and turn to Him.

We are wise when we create healthy boundaries with people who have harmed us, but we must also deal with our own heart towards them. We must forgive them, receive

healing, and develop a sincere desire for something good to happen in their lives. The most effective way to deal with this situation is to pray a blessing on them so they become more conscious of God's invitation to new life with Him. As we seek God for a right response, He may suggest ways for us to be kind and to bless the person in some tangible way. Remember hatred stirs up strife but love will cover a multitude of sins.

Prayer: Loving God, while I was still Your enemy, You invited me to come to You and receive Your love and forgiveness. Thank You for Your written Word and for teaching me Your way of forgiveness through the life and death of Jesus on my behalf. Please fill my heart with Your love so I may find a way to bless others as You have truly blessed me. Amen

FINDING COMFORT IN TROUBLESOME TIMES

Our God is a God of comfort to all who trust in Him. When life is difficult, God invites us to draw near to Him, trust that He sees everything and will act on our behalf. The Covid-19 pandemic caused much fear throughout the world and more suffering was added by the restrictions on gatherings with people imposed by world governments. God sees all that happens in our world and in troublesome times it is wise to draw near to Him, seek His wisdom, and trust Him to guide us in what is best for our future.

You who sit down in the High God's presence, spend the night in Shaddai's shadow, Say this: "God, you're my refuge. I trust in you and I'm safe!" That's right—he rescues you from hidden traps, shields you from deadly hazards. His huge outstretched arms protect you—under them you're perfectly safe; his arms fend off all harm. Fear nothing—not wild wolves in the night, not flying arrows in the day, not disease that prowls through the darkness, not disaster that erupts at high noon. Even though others succumb all around, drop like flies right and left, no harm will even graze you. (Psalm 91:1-7 MSG)

The only way one can be in anyone's shadow is when the person is close by. When we draw near to God, He promises to be near to us. The above Psalm lists numerous ways God will protect us when we choose to walk in His ways. While God is supreme over all, working together with and obeying the leaders of our country in their efforts to reduce harm to our citizens is another way we obey God. In His word God tells us to obey our leaders except when to do so would cause us to disobey God's principles.

When God's people take refuge in His shadow, His unfailing love and comfort will be evident in each circumstance they encounter. We have this hope within us:- if God is for us, who can be against us?

You have kept my command to remain strong in the faith no matter what happens. So I will keep you from the time of suffering. That time is going to come to the whole world. It will test those who live on the earth. (Revelation 3:10 NIRV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, May I always seek refuge in Your shadow and be aware of Your outstretched arms of protection over me and others around me. Amen

***Our God
is a God
of
comfort
to all who
trust in
Him.***

DOING A GOOD JOB

There's nothing more satisfying than finishing a job and having someone say, "What a good job you've done!" When someone performs well, whether it be in a trade or the arts, appreciating what they have done will bring them joy.

Show me someone who does a good job, and I will show you someone who is better than most and worthy of the company of kings. (Proverbs 22:29 GNT)

As we walk with God and follow His will for our lives, He promises to give us everything we need for our journey. It doesn't matter if the task is something that is done behind the scenes, and hardly gets noticed by anyone, or something that gains the attention of many. If we do our best in every situation, God is pleased, and we experience the satisfaction of a job well done.

Work hard so you can present yourself to God and receive his approval. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15 NLT)

In job training, if we work hard, learn from the experience of others, and just keep practicing our trade, we may find we develop more talent and a wider knowledge of what works and what doesn't. The challenge for most of us is to be willing to develop our talents and to keep working hard. We don't rise to the top of our trade in the first week or month. We should not expect to receive top wages at the beginning of a job but be willing to prove ourselves – our ability and our work ethic – before demanding higher wages. We don't need to have the same talent as someone else but with what we have been given, we simply need to do our best.

Pay careful attention to your own work, for then you will get the satisfaction of a job well done, and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else. (Galatians 6:4 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please help me to give each job responsibility and task the best effort that I can, trusting that when I do, You will help me do a good job. Amen

THE ONE WHO KEEPS ME GOING

Trouble shows up in our lives for many reasons. Some problems we bring on ourselves because of our poor choices and our self-willed behaviour. Other problems come from outside sources. The good news is that regardless of the source of the trouble, there is a solution. We can bring our troubles to God and ask for forgiveness and deliverance where necessary, and in response God will make us new again.

God, make us new again. May you be pleased with us. Then we will be saved. (Psalm 80:3 NIRV)

Several times in Psalm 80 the writer recounts things that have gone wrong or troubles that the people are facing. He reminds God that they are His chosen people whom He loves. He uses the picture of transplanting a plant into new ground and building a protective wall around it, but then seeing the wall broken down and harm and destruction done to the plant.

God who rules over all, return to us! Look down from heaven and see us! Watch over your vine. Guard the root you have planted with your powerful right hand. Take care of the branch you have raised up for yourself. (Psalm 80:14-15 NIRV)

The evil one will try to use our troubles to have us turn our backs on God. He will either say we don't deserve the problems so God must not care, or he'll tell us we've wrecked things by our own poor choices and God will not help us fix the mess we have created. Regardless of the source of the trouble, God is the answer to all our problems and His solutions are available to us when we turn to Him, seek His forgiveness, and turn our will and life, including our problems, over to His care.

Give us new life. We will worship you. Lord God who rules over all, make us new again. May you be pleased with us. Then we will be saved. (Psalm 80:18b-19 NIRV)

Prayer: Loving God, I come to You once again with all that is going on in my life and world. In all my problems, I ask for Your wisdom and guidance to resolve the issues, so I can go forward with You into the joyful life You have planned for me. Amen

I know that God helps me. The Lord is the one who keeps me going.
Psalm 54:4 NIRV

OCTOBER 20

LEARNING FROM OUR MISTAKES

We all make mistakes but it's what we do after the mistake has been made that is the measure of who we are as a person.

If you refuse to learn from your mistakes, you will be poor, and no one will respect you. If you listen when you are criticized, you will be honored. (Proverbs 13:18 ERV)

It is no surprise to God that we make mistakes. His plan for us is not to sit in a corner because we fear making a mistake. God desires that we limit our mistakes by seeking to know and do His will in all our affairs and when we stumble, admit the mistake and learn from it. God promises us honour when we resolve to take this route.

It's what we do after the mistake has been made that is the measure of who we are as a person.

The Bible is full of stories of people who made mistakes. God's people have never been perfect people. The stories of their mistakes are included in God's record of human history, not to shame the individuals but rather that we could learn from their mistakes and avoid making the same ones.

The things that happened to those people are examples. They were written to be warnings for us. We live in the time that all those past histories were pointing to. (1 Corinthians 10:11 ERV)

Someone composed a simple plan for dealing with mistakes that had these five actions:- Own it. Apologize. Accept the consequences. Learn from it. Let it go.

Don't quit your job simply because the boss is angry with you. If you remain calm and helpful, you can correct even great mistakes. (Ecclesiastes 10:4 ERV)

God made a way for us to deal with our mistakes. Jesus died that we might be forgiven for our sins and His blood cleanses us from all past wrongdoing.

But if we confess our sins, God will forgive us. We can trust God to do this. He always does what is right. He will make us clean from all the wrong things we have done. (1 John 1:9 ERV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please help me to seek Your will in all that I do and to work hard and make as few errors as possible. When I do make a mistake, give me the courage to admit it and deal with it quickly, and then let it go. Amen

OCTOBER 13

LIFESTYLE OF GRATITUDE

There are many things about God to love but one of the most amazing is this:- when we have been running around in addiction and then find ourselves in a life-threatening, chaotic situation, if we call out to God, He will help us.

I love the Lord because he hears my voice and my prayer for mercy. Because he bends down to listen, I will pray as long as I have breath! How kind the Lord is! How good he is! So merciful, this God of ours! What can I offer the Lord for all he has done for me? I will keep my promises to the Lord in the presence of all his people. I will offer you a sacrifice of thanksgiving and call on the name of the Lord. (Psalm 116:1-2, 5, 12, 14, 17 NLT)

Many of us have stories of how God saved us from what seemed like certain death, and for some of us that happened more than once! What kind of response should we have in the face of such kindness and faithful love?

The writer of this Psalm suggests that we pray, keep our promises to the Lord, and offer thanks. In practical terms we are encouraged to find a way to face problems with God rather than running from them or trying to cover them up with destructive habits. God was there in our darkest hour, and He is with us now. God heard us in the back alley, the prison cell, or wherever we were when we called out to Him, and He continues to hear us now and will act on our behalf. Sometimes we just need to be patient until God's solution is clearly seen, but it will surely come at just the right time.

A lifestyle of thanksgiving is built on memories of God's faithful love. Let's make a memory today!

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for the security You have brought to my life and for all that You have done for me. No matter what I face today, help me to remember that You are with me and that I can be certain of Your unfailing love and care. Amen

A lifestyle of thanksgiving is built on memories of God's faithful love. Let's make a memory today!

SURRENDER TO YOUR WILL

As we begin to follow God's principles in all affairs, we may have questions about the future and how God is going to work everything together for good. God has infinite power to help us leave behind those things we are in bondage to, and which hinder our relationship with Him and our life's purpose. Our part is to trust God and persevere through the obstacles we may encounter on our new path.

Commit your life to the Lord. Here is what he will do if you trust in him. He will make the reward for your godly life shine like the dawn. He will make the proof of your honest life shine like the sun at noon. (Psalm 37:5-6 NIRV)

Getting to know the richness of God's love for us will help us trust Him and surrender to His will.

Will God make all things right if we surrender to Him? Are we willing to trust God with our future? Asking questions like these is part of our decision making. To trust God, we need to know Him and know that He is trustworthy. Reading the Bible will give us knowledge of the character of God and how He acts on behalf of those who trust in Him. If we have decided to trust Him, are we fully committed to obeying the guidance that God gives us through His Word and in answer to our prayers?

Getting to know the richness of God's love for us will help us trust Him and surrender to His will. Jesus knew of the love our Heavenly Father has for us and because of this great love He was willing to come to earth to be our substitute and die for our sins. Jesus did not come to judge us but to save us. Are we willing to trust and surrender our will to this God of infinite love and mercy?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to improve my conscious contact with You and get to know You and You will for my life. Help me to bring my thoughts and actions into obedience to Your Word and to rely on You for the power to change. Amen

CHARACTER DEFECT – LYING

The Bible makes it clear that God detests lying. Most of the time we spent in addiction we did not speak the truth. At times we also lied by being silent in some situations and thereby gave a false impression of the truth. There are various reasons why we lied, some of which are:- to get what we wanted; to protect ourselves; to protect others; to get out of trouble. There is a slogan that says, "We are most like the devil when we lie."

Do not steal. Do not tell lies. Do not cheat one another. The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in those who tell the truth. (Leviticus 19:11; Proverbs 12:22 NLT)

It is sad when someone is a compulsive liar. People around them know they cannot be relied on to tell the truth. Some of us were once like that. We tried to paint word pictures of ourselves that were glowing and got angry when those who knew us challenged us with the truth. Thank God that He brought us to a place where we were able to deal with the truth. We then came to acknowledge that we were powerless over our dependencies and that our life had become unmanageable. In recovery we are encouraged to always tell the truth even though it can sometimes be painful.

An honest witness tells the truth; a false witness tells lies. Truthful words stand the test of time, but lies are soon exposed. (Proverbs 12:17, 19 NLT)

We are most like the devil when we lie.

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. (2 Peter 3:14 NLT)

Prayer: Loving God, I have fallen short in so many ways, please help me to build my life on the truth of Your Word. Amen

SELF-SUPPORTING – PERSONALLY AND IN THE GROUP

When we have spent time recovering from active addiction, one of the amazing transformations we experience is that we have learned to become more self-supporting. Instead of always expecting someone to rescue us with a handout, we learn not only to pay our own way but also to contribute to the needs of others.

May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work of our hands. (Psalm 90:17 NIV)

Our recovery is our responsibility, not something that we expect someone else to do for us. As we recover, we learn how to work hard and little by little we see the fruit of our labour. Working hard and providing for ourselves and our families is both the will of God and the provision of God.

Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

AA Tradition 7

Yet we hear that some of you are living in laziness, refusing to work, and wasting your time in gossiping. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ we appeal to such people—we command them—to quiet down, get to work, and earn their own living. (1 Thessalonians 3:11-12 TLB)

We practice being self-supported in our group life as well as in our personal recovery. We learn how to care for each other and how to ***“love our neighbour as ourselves”*** by putting money in the basket when it goes around at a meeting. We express the value of this principle in what is described in the A.A. Responsibility Statement: *When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that: I am responsible.* (1965 AA Convention Literature)

Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God. Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans. (2 Corinthians 3:5 NKJV; Proverbs 16:3 NIV)

It is God who gives us the skill to do a specific work. It is also God who gives us the will and the power to get to work and get the job done. We are created by God to be people who use the gifts God has given us. When we live responsibly, God will abundantly bless us.

Prayer: Loving God, Thank You for working in me and transforming me to do the work that You have created me to do. Help me to be faithful and trusting as well as responsible and generous in my work environment and wherever I meet with others. Amen

CONTINUING TO HOLD A GRUDGE

Unresolved grudges from offences committed against us in childhood usually show up in adulthood as deeply rooted bitterness. Some of us have carried the grief of these offenses for decades and have tried to relieve the pain and hopelessness we feel with addictive substances or co-dependent relationships. By not dealing with our grudges, over the years we have added to our pain.

See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. (Hebrews 12:15 NIV)

Forgiveness is the only way to stop the ongoing pain from buried grudges. For some of us who have been victimized, forgiveness is unthinkable. The pain of the offence remains and forgiveness rips at our sense of justice. We want the offender to suffer for what they inflicted on us. However, until we forgive the offender, the offence he or she committed against us will continue to harm us. The occurrence will fester with resentment in our souls, and the link between us and the perpetrator we despise will remain.

Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. (Colossians 3:12-13 NLT)

We can't change other people, but we can ask God for the courage to change ourselves. Hanging on to a bitter grudge and seeking revenge only sickens our soul and results in damage to those we are close to.

Jesus died for every wrong done to us or done by us. Why not choose to forgive others their sins as God has forgiven ours? Why not take the lingering pain and resentment of offences against us to the cross where they have been atoned for? Why not be guided in all our ways by the love of God?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please help me to forgive others as You have forgiven me. I bring all grudges and bitterness that I hold against others to You and ask You to free me from the bondage I have molded for myself. Please heal and restore those dark damaged places within me and help me to walk in the light and peace of Your presence ever with me. Amen

Forgiveness is the only way to stop the ongoing pain from buried grudges.

CONFRONTING SELF-PITY

One of our natural responses to pressure and challenge is to indulge in self-pity. Things aren't going our way, in our time. A misunderstanding occurs and maybe harsh words are spoken. Someone else seems to be having it easier than us. In these, and many other situations, 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 super-sensitivity within us 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 never helpful. We need to seek God to defend us. Our part is to stand in the truth and not get dragged down by the discouraging lies that foster self-pity. When it does appear, 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 my heart. Amen

THE TRIGGER TO OUR RATIONALIZING

Rationalizing endorses the internal belief that we are victims of circumstances beyond our control. We have lived for so long not taking responsibility for our actions and being unwilling to work through our problems that it seems overwhelming for us to come to terms with our part in the circumstances we are faced with today. We make excuses for our actions based on the hurt we have sustained. We reason that our wrong choices are justified because of what we have experienced.

And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. (2 Corinthians 9:8; Philippians 2:13; 4:13 NLT)

There may be traumatic events in our past to which we still have emotional links, and the resulting fear produces rationalization. God wants to heal our wounds and set us free from the false belief that the evil one assigned to those memories. Are we willing to be healed, or will we continue to let the devil "kick us while we are down?"

The trigger to our rationalization may be a bitter root of unforgiveness against someone who harmed us or just didn't help us when we thought they should have. Our way is to hold on to the hate of that person and rationalize that we have a right to feel this way. However, God's way is restoration through forgiveness, both given and received. Continuing to choose our way through rationalizing, rather than God's way of forgiving, will have a damaging effect on our recovery.

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We need to ask the God who loves us unconditionally to show us the root cause of those behaviours that continue to damage our lives. As we seek God in all our ways, we can be sure He will give us the power and guidance to make good choices that will set us free from our bondage to the past.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please help me to forgive those hurtful things that set me on a wrong course in life. Today I choose to surrender my will and life over to Your care. I trust You to give me the desire and the power to do what pleases You. Amen