

Tuesday

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.

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

Wednesday

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 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 NIRV)

The core of our thinking should be solidly based on God's Word. 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 NIRV)

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

Thursday

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, 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 nothing should be held back. Otherwise we will be 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 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

Friday

LONGING FOR SECURITY

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.

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

When we put our faith in Jesus 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
say and do. Amen***

Weekend

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.

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)

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.

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.

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 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

Download a free monthly booklet at:
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LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY DAILY MEDITATIONS



Week 4I

Monday

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 excited to set out on our new journey.

However, as the days and weeks went by, we began to miss the old familiar lifestyle. We started to grumble, miss some things we used to have, and began to view our life in addiction as maybe better than recovery.

Even though it's hard sometimes, we need to be willing to persevere through the rough moments 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