

A NEW IDENTITY

When we surrender our will and our lives into God's care we are restored to relationship with God. Our spirit comes alive as God's Spirit resides in us. God begins to pour His unfailing love into us. We begin to believe that we belong to God and are His cherished children who bring delight to His heart. This truth grows in our spirit and nurtures stability and freedom in our soul — that part of our being where we think and feel and make choices.

Now may the God of peace make you holy in every way, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again. (1 Thessalonians 5:23 NLT)

We begin to experience a sense of connectedness and fear gives way to a sense of security. God is working on our behalf. The reality that we no longer are alone begins to sink into our minds. Confusion gives way to more and more clarity. Hope grows, and despair moves away as surely as fog is dispersed by the warm sunshine. God is making us whole in every way.

Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy. (2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:24 NLT)

New patterns of behaviour are appearing as our spirit and soul are impacted by the truth of God's word. We begin to think more positively. Rather than reacting and running, we start to feel more secure and confident in dealing with what life brings our way. Our co-dependent need for approval from others diminishes as we acknowledge our identity as the treasured person God says we are. Lying and cheating and scamming are no longer necessary. We are living as people of integrity, and it feels good.

Prayer: Gracious God, Once again I affirm my identity in Christ Jesus and declare that I am a new person through Jesus' finished work on the cross. Thank you for my new life. Help me to live as the treasured person You say I am. Amen.

RECOVERY TOOL-PRAYER

Step 11 of the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous encourages us to improve our conscious contact with God through meditation and prayer. What is prayer? Simply put, prayer is talking with God.

God created us for relationship with Him. Friends are people who like each other and who enjoy sharing activities and spending time together. They share their thoughts and feelings with each other during good times and in times of struggle. They trust one another with their life experiences. Through God's infinite knowledge He knows all about us and asks us to open the door of our hearts and allow Him to come in so we can talk and share with one another as friends. That's prayer.

Jesus says: **"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me."** (Revelation 3:20 NIV)

Prayer includes listening to God as we read the Bible. We can talk to God about happenings in our day, tell God about our needs, thank God for life's simple pleasures and even seek His guidance when we bring our frustrations and complaints before Him. When we fail, we can bring our guilt and shame to God and receive His forgiveness and healing. All of this is done through prayer. This interaction with God helps our friendship with God deepen and grow

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank You that I am Your precious child and the smallest detail of my day is important to you. You are a good Father and I want to improve my conscious contact with You. Help me to seek Your counsel in every detail of my life. Amen

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LIFE WITH GOD IN
RECOVERY
DAILY MEDITATIONS

To go forward in recovery, we must find a new direction, new ways of responding, plus new guidelines for making decisions.

The Bible says, **Where there is no counsel, the people fall: but in the multitude of counselors there is safety.** (Proverbs 11:14 NKJV)

Good counsel comes from many sources including the Bible, pastors, friends who know and live by God's laws, or books and media that honour the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It may also come from a professional Christian counselor who understands addiction and recovery. Knowledgeable people we encounter on our journey may also encourage us by sharing the wisdom they received when dealing with similar issues to those we experience.

Two are better off than one, because together they can work more effectively. If one of them falls down the other can help him up. But if someone is alone ... there is no one to help him ... Two men can resist an attack that would defeat one man alone. (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 GNT)

We need to share honestly about the temptations we are experiencing. We are not unique! Wise sober friends have had similar experiences and have learned lessons that can help us. We need to respond in humility to honest feedback. Foundational to all other counsel, we need to seek the Holy Spirit who will guide us into all truth.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to welcome Your wisdom and the help of wise counselors. Keep me honest. Help me to lay down my pride and, together with You, follow the path of recovery to new life. Amen

Tuesday

SHOW RESPECT FOR GOD

Through the 12-Step Program of A.A. and reading the Bible we came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity and, as we moved along in our life in recovery, many of us came to that place where we made a decision to turn our will and life over to the care of God. The benefits of doing so are too numerous to list and the wisdom in making that move is evidenced in the new life we are experiencing.

Anyone who shows respect for the LORD has a strong tower. It will be a safe place for his children. Respect for the LORD is like a fountain that gives life. It turns you away from the jaws of death. (Proverbs 14:26-27 NIRV)

As much as we regret the negative impact on our loved ones while we were living a destructive lifestyle, we can take heart that, as we give ourselves to the task of loving God and respecting His ways, we will now be a blessing to them. We will also be a witness to them of the safety and stability one finds as they live each day in the will of God.

Just as a fountain of clear spring water is refreshing and life-giving when we drink from it, so God pours out His life-giving Spirit upon us to give us the energy, grace, and wisdom we need to walk in His ways. The question is, how deeply are we willing to drink of the fountain of life that God provides?

During unpredictable times, it is a comfort to know that all we need to persevere through to peace in our hearts will come from God and not from our own limited resources. What a privilege it is to turn our hearts towards our gracious God and know He is waiting and listening, ready to guide us and act on our behalf.

Prayer: Loving God, Help me to live respectfully each day as I honour You. Thank You for being a safe and life-giving place as well as a source of blessing for me. I am so glad You are on my side and that I can live under Your protective care. Amen

Wednesday

REPROGRAMMING OUR THOUGHTS FOR GROWTH

Step 10 advises us to continue to take personal inventory and, when we are wrong, promptly admit it. All of us have character defects which are clearly observed by others but not so much by ourselves.

You were getting along so well. Who has interfered with you to hold you back from following the truth? For God is at work within you, helping you want to obey him, and then helping you do what he wants. (Galatians 5:7; Philippians 2:13 TLB)

God says we are to get rid of those things that hold us back from following the truth of His Word. If we want to get our body in shape, we go to a physical fitness gym. The initial physical workouts will be painful as we stretch muscles and tendons that have not been stretched for some time. If we want to get our spirit and soul in shape, we need to read the Bible and learn what God says we are to do. By learning and obeying these principles our minds will be transformed, and we will experience a freshness in all we think and do. Reprogramming our minds may be challenging at first because some of our reasoning is based on the comfort of the half-truths we continue to hold to and believe. However, when we know and apply the truth, the truth will set us free.

May kindness and peace be yours from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness. Jesus was the first to conquer death, and he is the ruler of all earthly kings. Christ loves us, and by his blood he set us free from our sins. (Revelation 1:5 CEV)

A daily inventory will help us assess if our actions are guided by the wisdom of God's principles. As we see positive results from an obedient response to God's Word, we will develop a deep reverence for God and His ways.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to continue to take daily personal inventory and when I am wrong, promptly admit it. Give me understanding and wisdom based on Your Word so that I may apply Your principles in all my affairs. Amen

Thursday

LEARNING TO LET GO

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.

Holding on to anger and pain doesn't fix anything. Burying a grudge deep within and putting layers of blame on top of the hurt doesn't bring healing. Whether the irritation or the wound is recent or something we've held for a long time, perhaps today is the day to finally let go, so we can be joyful, optimistic and grateful.

For everything there is a season ... A time to search and a time to quit searching. A time to keep and a time to throw away. (Ecclesiastes 3:1a, 6 NLT)

Our shame is often one of the greatest barriers to living joyfully. God promises us forgiveness. Jesus paid with His life so we could have eternal life and freedom from sin. The devil seeks to keep us hiding our pain in the darkness of unforgiveness so we will feel like damaged goods. It's time to let the past go into the cleansing river of God's unlimited forgiveness.

Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy. (Proverbs 28:13 NIV)

Admittedly, life isn't perfect, and we may face circumstances and challenges that seem bigger than we can handle. Thankfully we can let our feelings of worry and fear point us to our need for God's help, which will surely be available when we ask for it. As many others have done in the past, let's get rid of everything that slows us down and causes us to fall. Let's notice and use the gifts we have today and let the rest go.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You know me and You know everything about me and my circumstances. I bring all that hinders me to You and choose to let it go into Your cleansing river of forgiveness, so that I may live in Your peace and joy each day. Amen