

FRIDAY

## DEVELOPING PATIENCE

Our lives in addiction were often shaped by characteristics of impatience and selfishness. We didn't take much time to think about others or be present with them. Communicating appropriately in an uplifting way never occurred to us. We used angry words to hurt and manipulate and vent our frustration. Now that we are in recovery we are seeking to find a way of life that reflects the kindness, goodness, and patience that God desires us to have with one another.

***Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love.*** (Ephesians 4:2 NLT)

It takes patient deliberate action to live with integrity and consistently tell the truth. We need patience to see a job through to the end. Beginnings are easy, but "keeping on keeping on" until the job is done takes a lot of determination. ***Finishing is better than starting. Patience is better than pride.*** (Ecclesiastes 7:8 NLT)

We were created to live and work with each other. It is a trying task to learn how to co-operate with each other, to listen to another's point of view, and particularly to give way to someone else's ideas, and yet that's how life works. As we learn to give attention to details that never mattered to us in the past, we need to be very patient with both ourselves and others. We need to have consideration for the requirements of those who are working with us.

***May God, who gives this patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other, as is fitting for followers of Christ Jesus.*** (Romans 15:5 NLT)

We need to regularly ask God to fill us with the fruit of His Holy Spirit as we deal with core character defects that have been the norm for us for many years.

***But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.*** (Galatians 5:22-23 NLT)

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to patiently deal with myself, others, and situations that threaten me. Come and fill me to overflowing with Your Holy Spirit and produce in me the good fruit I need to be self-controlled in all my ways. Amen*

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Weekend

## MOVING AWAY FROM BEING ALOOF AND ISOLATED

Addiction is a disease of isolation. That's not news to those of us who have spent time there. The challenge for us is to find what is necessary to become willing to come close to others and attach emotionally in the right way. We need to leave behind the false impressions we like to give when we are aloof and pretending to be fine. When someone says, "It's all good," it seldom is. When we hear ourselves saying it, it's time to look below the surface and sort out what's really going on. It is true that we, who had care givers who were inconsistent or deficient in their care and support of us, may be fearful of any future pain or abandonment and this keeps us from coming close to another person. Many of us suffer from various forms of "attachment disorder." How can we begin to approach others for who they are today rather than seeing them as being like those who caused us pain in our past?

***But if we live in the light, as God does, we share in life with each other. And the blood of his Son Jesus washes all our sins away.*** (1 John 1:7 CEV)

God's word promises that as we walk in the Light, with our will and our life surrendered to God, and practice His principles in all our affairs, we will be strengthened to share our lives with others. We don't even have to do it perfectly. God knows we will make mistakes and promises to wash away our sins as we repent and come to Him for cleansing.

***The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ.*** (1 Corinthians 12:12 NLT)

God's plan for us has always been to live in relationship with Him and with others, supporting and being supported, just as the various parts of our body support each other and work together for our good. We can ask God to help us be willing to give up our tendency to be aloof and isolated and move into His perfect plan for our lives.

***So you are no longer outsiders and strangers. You are citizens together with God's people. You are also members of God's family.*** (Ephesians 2:19 NIRV)

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to move away from being aloof and isolated and learn how to live in loving relationship with You and with others. Amen*

## LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY DAILY MEDITATIONS



Week 48

Monday

### FIRING THE COMMITTEE IN MY HEAD

We have all done things we are not proud of. Some of us think we've done more harm than others, done worse things than them, or continued for longer than they did. Shame is an overwhelming emotion that the evil one encourages us to wallow in. The voices of shame are relentless in their accusation. The committee in our head starts up as soon as we wake up and doesn't shut up until we manage to get to sleep again. When we put God in charge, one of the first things He will do with our permission, is to fire the committee in our head.

***But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.*** (Ephesians 2:4-5 NIV)

God has given us a new start in life because He loves us. He's been waiting for us to turn away from our destructive habits and rotten attitudes. When we turn to Him for forgiveness and saving, He will do as He has promised. He knows we have made a wreck of our lives. As the verse says, we were "dead in our transgressions" but....God's grace is greater than all our sin!

***I have been crucified with Christ. I don't live any longer, but Christ lives in me. Now I live my life in my body by faith in the Son of God. He loved me and gave himself for me.*** (Galatians 2:20 NIRV)

When God says we are saved, we are saved. When God forgives, we are forgiven. When God heals, we are made completely whole. It's not something we have to produce in ourselves, it is God's gift to us. The greater the wreck we have been, the more brilliantly the goodness of God's love can shine through us who have been saved. So, the next time the committee in our head tries to speak, we get to hold our head high and turn off the noise by saying, "Because of God's great love for me, I've been made alive in Christ. I'm washed clean. I'm a brand new person. That old me is gone and this new me is the beloved son/daughter of God."

*Prayer: Lord Jesus, I am so grateful to live in Your love today and to hold my head high with the dignity that You give me. My old life is gone. Help me to live my new life in the truth that "there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus". Amen*

NEW RELATIONSHIPS

We all long for the joy and comfort of being in a loving intimate relationship with another. When we come into recovery it's important to remind ourselves that we haven't been practicing good principles in relating to others and if we want a healthy relationship going forward it's a good idea to take some time to figure out what a healthy relationship looks like. It will take trial and error on our part to put new principles into practice, so it is best to make our mistakes and learn some lessons while keeping some time and distance from any new intimate relationship. This will ensure any long-term relationship is built on respect rather than on comfort for our wounds. Our relationship with God must be our number one priority because God is the only one whose love is unfailing. The best humans are flawed and so our first lesson needs to come from our all-loving God who will show us right from wrong in a true and balanced way.

*Let me hear of your unfailing love each morning, for I am trusting you. Show me where to walk, for I give myself to you.* (Psalm 143:8-18 NLT)

It's important to pray and trust God to lead us to that person with whom we can have a solid future. Just because someone is attractive and seems to be a nice person doesn't mean that they are right for us. We often have inflated views of ourselves as well as unrealistic expectations of others that are linked back to our co-dependent ways. It takes time to grow together in a healthy relationship as we offer our precious but imperfect selves to someone else who is precious, but also imperfect, and allow God to determine the relationship He has planned for us.

*Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.* (1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NLT)

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, It's true that I need to learn from You how to be a loving person who can have a respectful relationship. Help me to learn and grow so I can experience the joy of having a loving relationship with You and with another person. Amen*

TEMPERATION TO SELF-WILL

Many people believe that freedom to act as they choose gives them the opportunity to have control over their own lives. In the Bible, the real reason the first man and woman were deceived into eating the forbidden fruit was that they believed that when they had the knowledge of right and wrong, they would be like God with the ability to control their own destiny. How wrong they were and how vulnerable we are when we believe this lie.

*The fear of the Lord (respect, awe & submission to God) is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.* (Proverbs 1:7 NKJV)

The devil will tempt us with something appealing to our flesh and then give us reasons why it's not so bad or why we deserve it. He may even remind us that God will forgive us for any wrongdoing, so why not just go ahead and do it. The devil always twists the truth as his ultimate motive is to destroy us. He wants us to obey him and by doing so disobey God. He deceives us with things that are appealing in the moment but will never give us the satisfaction we desire.

Temptation isn't just offering us something that we want in the moment. The appealing core of temptation is the lie that free from God we can figure out what is morally good for us and act in ways that won't hurt anyone else. Unfortunately, there is no human effort or wisdom that can keep us from harming ourselves and others when we determinedly act on our own self-will. We will self-destruct in one way or another unless we acknowledge that God made us and knows what is best for us, and then choose to surrender to His ways.

*All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.* (2 Timothy 3:16 NLT)

*Prayer: Dear God, Help me to be aware of the promptings of your Holy Spirit as He helps me sort truth from error. Give me the strength to surrender my will and my life to Your loving care and acknowledge that You alone are God and You know what is best for me. Amen*

GOLDEN WORDS OF WISDOM

One of the faulty measures people often use for determining the success of a person is how much money they have made. Many people who have stumbled into addiction know that lots of money can be made, but also quickly lost. Too often very wealthy people have lost everything as they fell into the black hole of chasing after their next high.

*Wisdom is worth much more than gold. Understanding is worth much more than silver.* (Proverbs 16:16 ERV)

We can take great comfort that as we face both our hurts and hopes with God, the wisdom and understanding of His written Word will show us the way to where true success in life is found.

*Pride is the first step toward destruction. Proud thoughts will lead you to defeat. It is better to be a humble person living among the poor than to share the wealth among the proud.* (Proverbs 16:18-19 ERV)

When we think we have got it all together and know all that we need to know without consulting God or others, we are well on our way to relapse. It all begins in our thinking and that's why it's important to share on a regular basis with a sponsor or mentor what's going on between our ears. The wise person is the humble person who knows they still have a lot to learn and are willing to do something about that today.

*Good people try to avoid evil. They watch what they do and protect themselves. Good things happen to those who learn from their experiences, and the Lord blesses those who trust him.* (Proverbs 16:17, 20 ERV)

The joy of this journey with God is that we can learn from our own experience as well. If we keep watch over our daily activities by doing a Step 10 inventory each night, we will learn and experience good things from God and grow more in wisdom and understanding of His principles than we ever thought possible.

*Prayer: Heavenly Father, I ask You to work in my heart, so my desire is not for wealth but to live by Your principles. Please strengthen the longing within me to be guided in all my actions by Your Word and help me to live accordingly. Amen*