

LIFE WITH GOD
IN RECOVERY
DAILY MEDITATIONS



Week 40

Monday

DEALING WITH DENIAL

Denial is described as a refusal to admit the truth or reality of a situation. Denial is a coping mechanism people use to help them deal with uncomfortable memories or circumstances.

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 17:9-10 NLT)

Denial of our dependency on a substance and/or a person, is the first obstacle we must overcome in recovery. Others may have identified the negative impact our dependency has on us, but we may continue to deny that a problem even exists. Step One reminds us: *-We admitted we were powerless over our dependency and that our life had become unmanageable.* Failure to acknowledge this keeps us from seeking the help we need and taking the necessary steps to get well.

For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. (Romans 7:18-20 NIV)

God calls us to live in truth. When we put our faith and trust in Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes to live within us, and He will reveal the truth we need to acknowledge about ourselves.

Jesus said, ***When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future.*** (John 16:13 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please reveal to me where I am vulnerable to denial of the truth and the effect it is having on my life and relationships. Fill me with the life-giving truth of Your Word and help me to walk in Your ways. I desire to be free from those things that hinder my life with You or my recovery. Amen

Tuesday

RESPONDING TO FRIENDSHIP

Through Jesus, we are invited to a relationship with God. As we respond to God's unfailing love and care for us, we will find friendship, peace, and security. That security will help us grow strong and enable us to be a loving and caring friend to others.

We see an early example of this in the Bible through the story of Abraham. ***Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness, and he was called God's friend.*** (James 2:23 NIV)

We know that Abraham left his family and went to an unknown land because God had told Him to do this. Abraham stood strong and followed God through a number of very challenging circumstances. However, at certain times in the journey, like so many of us, Abraham gave into fear and stumbled. Though Abraham didn't always do what was right, God knew Abraham's desire to obey Him. Even when Abraham was unfaithful to God, God was still faithful to Abraham. That's a true friend. Like Abraham, we also need help as we try to be a friend but struggle because of happenings along the way. Jesus has promised to be a friend to us, the closest friend possible. Jesus will show us the way forward as we determine in our hearts to follow Him. He will teach us about love and commitment. Jesus will always be with us to guide us. Jesus offers us friendship that will last for eternity.

The Lord is a friend to those who fear him. He teaches them his covenant. Jesus says: ***Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends.*** (Psalm 25:14, Revelation 3:20 NLT)

Friends spend time together, share interests and concerns. Jesus invites us to walk and talk with Him throughout the day, welcoming Him to share what we are experiencing, and learning from Him how to resolve issues that arise. Today is a wonderful opportunity to say "Yes" to friendship with Jesus.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, My desire is to have a lifetime of friendship with You. I welcome You to know my thoughts and feelings. I want to share my ideas with You and in turn hear what You have to say to me. Please help me to be a good friend and to choose to follow Your principles in all my affairs. Amen

Wednesday

SLEEP/INSOMNIA

Insomnia is a common sleep disorder that makes it hard to fall asleep, hard to stay asleep, or causes a person to wake up too early and not be able to get back to sleep. It saps our energy, our mood, our health, and our quality of life. Insomnia and addiction are often linked because a lack of sleep creates physical and emotional issues that we attempt to self-medicate with drugs or alcohol. Insomnia is extremely common in active drinkers and in those who are in recovery after having stopped drinking.

The God who created us promises sleep to those he loves – that's us. There are lots of available tips to help us sleep: the practice of going to bed and getting up at a set time each day; exercising regularly; not napping after supper; no food or drinks close to bedtime; avoiding anything with caffeine, etc. However, the "go to" method should first be to pray and ask God to give us the sleep He intends for us to have.

In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat—for he grants sleep to those he loves. (Psalm 127:2 NIV)

If something has caused us to be fearful, God promises that we will dwell in safety. We can sleep peacefully because God will be awake to watch over us.

In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety. He who watches over you will not slumber; (Psalm 4:8, 121:3b NIV)

What keeps us awake? If it's worries about the future, God offers peace to us if we will pray and offload our concerns to Him.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I ask You to wash through my conscious, subconscious, and unconscious mind and cleanse my anxious thoughts with the blood of Jesus so nothing can unsettle me while I sleep. I will lie down in peace and sleep because You are watching over me. Amen

Thursday

HEALING BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS

Making amends is a responsibility we must take very seriously if we want to protect our sobriety. While making amends is not necessarily a comfortable process, it is necessary for our growth. If we can admit what went wrong in our past relationships and admit our part in it, there is a good chance we will choose not to make the same mistakes again.

Suppose you are offering your gift at the altar. And you remember that your brother or sister has something against you. Leave your gift in front of the altar. First go and make peace with them. Then come back and offer your gift. (Matthew 5:23-24 NIRV)

For us to risk taking the first step in making amends with others would be impossible if God had not first demonstrated the way for us. Repeatedly we failed to keep God's commandments and yet God sent His Son Jesus into the world to atone for our sin so that we could be reconciled to Him. God has completed the work necessary for us to know peace and now He calls us to extend that peace to those in our circle of family and friends. God didn't wait for us to come to Him. He prepared in advance. He reached out to us with this wonderful gift of reconciliation when we didn't dare approach Him. As we begin the work of restoring our troubled relationships, we can reflect on God's way of offering forgiveness and peace.

For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:19 NLT)

When we make amends under the guidance of our loving God, everyone is blessed. Confessing our wrong to someone we have harmed means they will no longer need to carry around the lingering excess baggage of the event. The resentment we held towards one another will begin to disappear and each of us will experience more freedom in the future.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Thank you for sending Jesus into the world so that my relationship with You could be restored. Now I ask You to work in my heart so that my relationships with others may also be made right. Amen

FRIDAY

TRANSITION

Transition is difficult for us when we first come into recovery. It requires that we leave behind a known way of life and transition to a new way of living. What has been known to us in the past is comfortable, even though it may not have been good for us and most certainly was not the best way for us. Growth requires change. A seed is put in the ground and dies so that a new life form may develop. Flowers and fruit grow in their season. Unless the fruit is eaten or the flowers are picked and arranged to beautify a setting, both will wither and die where they have grown. Dead plants may be plowed back into the ground to provide nutrients for the next crop to come. Transition takes place from one season to the next.

The Lord will lead you. He himself is with you. He will not fail you or leave you. Don't worry. Don't be afraid! (Deuteronomy 31:8 ERV)

In recovery we are transitioning not only from the misuse of substances but also from things such as:- a lifestyle of isolation to one of looking for and accepting peer support; from trying to figure out the "big questions of life" about meaning and purpose and destiny, to consulting God and learning how God answers those questions. We are transitioning from avoiding the pain in our hearts to confronting it and receiving comfort and healing. We are moving away from impulsive and obsessive thinking to gratitude and solutions which develop as we pray and learn – and the list goes on.

The Lord says, "I will teach you and guide you in the way you should live. I will watch over you and be your guide. (Psalm 32:8 ERV)

Without God's promise to teach and guide and watch over us in this new of life, the burden would be too great for us. That is why it is important to remember every day of our lives that we are powerless and that on our own our life is unmanageable. Each day it is necessary for us to take time to read the Scriptures and get to know this wonderful God who will restore us to sanity. Then moment by moment, day by day, we purposefully turn our will and life over to His care.

Prayer: Loving God, as I face this day, give me the strength and courage to make whatever transition is necessary in my heart, in my thinking, and even in my circumstances, so that my character defects will go, and Your will becomes the desire of my heart in all my affairs. Amen

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Weekend

LIVING RIGHT

A lifestyle of loving God and loving our neighbour is the foundation of our new life with God in recovery. When we accept Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, we are assured that we are adopted into the family of God and that He will care for us. As we follow our Heavenly Father's guidance and live by His principles, He gives us the desire and power to do what pleases Him and the outcome for us is a satisfying and good life.

Be careful to obey all my commands, so that all will go well with you and your children after you, because you will be doing what is good and pleasing to the LORD your God. (Deuteronomy 12:28 NLT)

When we follow God's ways, we are instructed to consider how our actions might impact the lives of others. Forgiving, and giving up our right to revenge for the harm others have caused us, sets us free to relate in a safe way to the person who hurt us. Humbly asking for forgiveness for the harm we have caused others will free us from the shame we have been carrying and allow us to live with self-respect. Praying for those who are causing trouble and giving us a hard time will bring peaceful solutions to complex problems.

Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. (Luke 6:36-37 NIV)

To live right we need to make every effort to have the same attitude as Jesus. When He was beaten and nailed to the cross Jesus prayed for the people who crucified Him to be forgiven. Jesus never sinned yet He humbled Himself and went to the cross to pay the penalty for this world's sin so that we who believe can be set free from our sin, past, present, and future. Jesus commands us to love our neighbours in the same way He has loved us.

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had. (Romans 15:5 NIV)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I want to live with love and kindness in all my relationships. Help me to humbly seek forgiveness from those I have harmed. Help me to forgive and pray for those who have harmed me. Help me to have the same attitude that Jesus had in all my interactions with others. Help me to love as You love me. Amen