

Tuesday

A SOLID PLACE TO STAND

After years of uncertainty and upheaval at every turn, it's wonderful to recover a life that has some stability. It's delightful to wake up in the morning without wondering what happened the night before or to fret about how we are going to get what we need to see us through the day ahead. The heavy burden of wrecked relationships and burned bridges with those we cared about is in the process of being healed. How many times in the past did we wonder if we would ever find a way out of the horrible mess we were trapped in?

In our brokenness and chaos, we cried out to God, even though we weren't sure He was there or cared about us or could do anything for us. We simply longed for someone somewhere to do something to improve our lot in life.

I waited patiently for the Lord to help me, and he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the pit of despair, out of the mud and the mire. He set my feet on solid ground and steadied me as I walked along. He has given me a new song to sing, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see what he has done and be amazed. They will put their trust in the Lord. (Psalm 40:1-3 NLT)

God patiently waited for us to come to Him for help. Until we exhausted our own resources and admitted we were powerless, we kept trying to make life work. God heard us when we called out to Him and responded with love. When we turned our will and our lives over to His care we became God's beloved children. Now we can rejoice that God is our Heavenly Father, that we are being taught about who we are in Christ and are being equipped to do the things God has prepared in advance for us to do. We are truly standing in a solid place!

Prayer: Heavenly Father, My life is not perfect and I still have a journey ahead of me. Nevertheless, I am truly amazed by what you have already done for me and in me. What once seemed impossible to me is now a living reality. One by one I see your promises fulfilled as I put my trust in Your word. Thank you for loving and caring for me. I am forever grateful that I can stand on solid ground and know for certain that Your Presence is ever with me. Amen.

Wednesday

HONOURING GOD WITH MY BODY

God made our bodies to be a home for His Holy Spirit. It goes against the "worldly wisdom of our time" to acknowledge the truth that our bodies are not our own but belong to God. Life with God in recovery gives us the opportunity to explore and experience this truth.

Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20 NLT)

It's important that we keep a healthy balance in all our activities, not just in those related to staying free from our addictive habits. Anything can become a demanding passion when we allow it to become the primary focus of our life. Exercise, food, healthy socializing and sleep are all important components of a recovered life but they, in themselves, don't give us life. Even healthy activities can become addictive if they are foremost in our thoughts and consume most of our time. We are to honour God in all we say and do.

God's Word tells us:- ***Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.*** (Ephesians 4:29 NLT)

Our attitude and words are important indicators of whether or not our bodies are a home where God's Holy Spirit dwells. We need to deal with complaining, fault-finding, persistent arguing, blaming etc. The poison of bitter resentment and grudges needs to be cleansed from our system. Are we spending more time talking about our problems than seeking possible solutions? Does our attitude and speech encourage others?

Let's make every effort to cleanse God's Holy Temple and live a life that is pure and Holy in His sight.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I acknowledge that my body is not my own. I belong to You. Cleanse me from secret sins and make me a person useful in Your service. Amen

Thursday

IMPULSIVE BEHAVIOUR

Many of us, especially in early recovery, find it difficult to control our impulsive behaviour. Our history of relapses is a stark reminder of this fact. Sometimes relapse happens while we are doing well at holding back on the use of our addictive substance, but then we begin to act out in other areas such as gambling, sex, rage, over-eating etc. To be successful in recovery we need to control the thoughts and emotions that drive our impulsive behaviour.

In the past you were slaves to sin—sin controlled you. But thank God, you fully obeyed what you were taught. You were made free from sin, and now you are slaves to what is right. (Romans 6:17-18 ERV)

Due to our previous lifestyle, it is probable that our brains have become incorrectly programmed about how to successfully live our lives. Our brains will need to be reprogrammed. In Step 2 of the 12-Step program, we come to believe that a Power greater than ourselves can restore us to sanity. God has promised to show us the way to maintain a life of doing what is right and to enjoy the peace that goes with it. Step-by-step our way of thinking will be changed as we submit to following God's principles.

Be alert and think straight. Put all your hope in how kind God will be to you when Jesus Christ appears. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. (1 Peter 1:13 CEV, Hebrews 12:11 NIV)

One of the areas we first become aware of our impulsive behaviour is in our emotional reactions to what others say or do. With God's power working in us to control ourselves we can step away from the situation and give God a chance to show us a better way to respond.

If we are to learn about controlling our impulses, the experience, strength, and hope of those who have walked this journey before us is important to seek out and put into practice. Others' recovery in this area is a testament to what God can do and will give us hope that we also can learn to control our impulsive behaviour.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to grow in grace towards others and to be consistent in making choices for good reasons rather than acting impulsively on my emotions. Amen

FRIDAY

INTIMACY

STEP TWO – POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES

As we turn our hearts towards God, He strengthens us to do what we need to do. Our confidence is stirred to believe that there is a Power greater than ourselves who will restore us to sanity. God not only has the Power to restore us to sanity but is able and willing to do so. Our part is to allow Him to teach us His Word and to become willing to obey His principles in all we say and do.

The eyes of the Lord search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. Show me the right path, O Lord; point out the road for me to follow. (2 Chronicles 16:9a; Psalm 25:4 NLT)

God's ways are totally different from the twists and turns we made in our past life. At times life itself seemed grossly unfair to us. Perhaps we looked at others with envy because of the things they had that we felt we were missing out on. Perhaps our unmet needs led us down the pathway of addiction. In Step 2 we are choosing to believe that God will work those years of hardship for good and will restore us to the sanity of living a joyful, purposeful life.

Give me a sign of your goodness, that my enemies may see it and be put to shame, for you, Lord, have helped me and comforted me. (Psalm 86:17 NIV)

God loved us so much that He sent Jesus into the world to redeem us from our sin. Jesus did not come to judge us for what we have done but to save us by paying the debt we incurred. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is the power working in us to restore us to sanity. By believing in Jesus' sacrificial death and resurrection we are forgiven our sin and raised to new life with Him. One day we will go to live with Jesus forever in the place He has gone to prepare for us. What a wonderful day that will be!

This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! (2 Corinthians 5:17 NLT)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, In Christ alone my hope is found for only through Jesus can my life be restored to sanity. I am eternally grateful that Jesus ever lives to intercede on my behalf before Your throne of grace. Amen

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Weekend

HAVING FUN

God's plan for a satisfying and fulfilling life is that we would find enjoyment in daily living while always remaining vigilant about threats to our sobriety and well-being.

A cheerful heart makes you healthy. But a broken spirit dries you up. The best thing we can do is to enjoy eating, drinking, and working. I believe these are God's gifts to us. (Proverbs 17:22 NIRV, Ecclesiastes 2:24 CEV)

Too many people think that all the fun gets left behind when we are no longer going to bars and parties where substances are used and abused. What many of us have discovered is that there is much more enjoyment in the fun times of life when we experience them sober rather than when we were "under the influence."

There is a time to weep and there's a time to laugh. There is a time to be sad and there's a time to dance. (Ecclesiastes 3:4 NIRV)

Having fun helps us to bond with others who appreciate the same things we do. Friendships deepen as we play together and enjoy shared interests. There is more to recovery than sharing our stories in meetings, as important as that is. We were created to enjoy God, each other, and creation and it is important to take time to do that in light-hearted ways.

There is an old saying, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Play relieves stress. Our brain works better when we give it a rest and enjoy leisure activities that bring us pleasure.

This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be happy today! (Psalm 118:24 ERV)

Different people find relaxation in different things; therefore, we need to experiment with what is fun for us. God's invitation to us today is to find time and a way to lighten up and have some fun enjoying a playful activity.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to find the right balance of working hard and having fun. Give me the heart of a child to enjoy simple pleasures and make the most of what each day has to offer. Amen

LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY DAILY MEDITATIONS



Week 43

Monday

FEAR AND INSECURITY

As humans, we long for security in many forms;- security within our own family, security about who we are inside our own heads, security of our position within any group we are a part of, security from any type of threat to our well-being, and security from anything else we may consider a threat to our lives. The lack of anything we consider necessary to our well-being may make us feel insecure.

In peace I will both lie down and sleep, For You alone, O Lord, make me to dwell in safety. (Psalm 4:8 NASB)

This Is the security the founders of AA had in mind when they assured us that as we turned our will and our life over to God's care and walked in humility and sobriety with God, fear of people and economic insecurity would leave us.

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. ... So do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord. Remember the great reward it brings you! Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised. (2 Corinthians 9:8 NIV; Hebrews 10:35-36 NLT)

God will hold us steady while life shifts and turns around us and while our emotions settle within us. God invites us to seek Him in the middle of unpredictable and insecure circumstances. God promises to provide all we need not only for ourselves but also so we can be productive and helpful in every good work. We are encouraged to confidently trust in God, knowing that as we focus on doing His will in all our affairs, all God's promises are rightfully ours.

For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 1:6 NASB)

Life without God is uncertain and dangerous, but life with God is filled with peace, hope, and a future, as we trust Him in all our ways.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Help me to trust You to provide all I need, at all times, in all things, so I can do the good work that You've prepared for me and receive the rewards You promise to those who diligently seek to do Your will. Amen