

Tuesday

## ACCOUNTABILITY:—PRACTICAL TOOL FOR LIVING SOBER

As we continue our life with God in recovery it is wise to establish accountability for our actions, first to God and then to another person. Our accountability before God is to love Him and follow His principles in all our affairs. The other person to whom we are accountable is normally called our sponsor. This is someone who has agreed to see us on a regular basis to check how we are coping with sobriety and life in general. Accountability means we have agreed to certain rules of conduct and are making every effort to live by these rules.

***Don't give any part of yourself to serve sin. Don't let any part of yourself be used to do evil. Instead, give yourselves to God. You have been brought from death to life. So give every part of yourself to God to do what is right.*** (Romans 6:13 NIRV)

As we journey, the tempter will certainly seek to invade our thinking by enticing us with thoughts of our old ways which were enjoyable for a time. When this happens, we need to pray and seek God to strengthen us against temptation. Our accountability is being challenged, and we need to call our sponsor or pastor and speak with them about the battle that is going on within us. We need to be steadfast in our accountability.

***The weapons I fight with are not the weapons the world uses. In fact, it is just the opposite. My weapons have the power of God to destroy the camps of the enemy.*** (2 Corinthians 10:4 NIRV)

We need to stand firm on the truth that Jesus redeemed us from sin and evil, and that the Power of God to uphold our freedom lives within us. We are accountable to God to stand firm in His Power and obey His Word.

***For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*** (1 Peter 1:18-19 NIV)

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, Please strengthen me by the Power of Your Holy Spirit to remain accountable to You and faithfully practice Your principles in all my affairs. Amen***

Wednesday

## MAKING MISTAKES

When we begin our new life with God in recovery we often get discouraged because we feel we are unable to control the urges of our old nature. But, as we choose to believe and act on the precious promises God has made to us, the new nature we have put on will develop and we will experience more control of our thoughts and behaviour. We have a power greater than ourselves working in us to help us avoid making the mistakes our old nature is demanding.

***For as you know him better, he will give you, through his great power, everything you need for living a truly good life: he even shares his own glory and his own goodness with us!*** (2 Peter 1:3 TLB)

We all suffer from making mistakes. We like to please ourselves and unwise decisions come from self-serving. When we turned our will and life over to God, we were made new in the spirit of our minds so, when reckless thoughts cloud our thinking, we need to pray and uphold the promises God has made to us. We have died to self and have been made alive in Jesus to live lives that are pleasing to God.

***He died for all so that all who live — having received eternal life from him — might live no longer for themselves, to please themselves, but to spend their lives pleasing Christ who died and rose again for them.*** (2 Corinthians 5:15 TLB)

The power greater than ourselves who lives within us is the transforming grace of the Holy Spirit. He is the one who renews our mind to make it conform to the will of God. We progress away from pleasing ourselves and making mistakes when we fix our mind on Jesus, the One who is faithful to perfect our faith.

***Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but be a new and different person with a fresh newness in all you do and think. Then you will learn from your own experience how his ways will really satisfy you.*** (Romans 12:2 TLB)

***Prayer: Lord Jesus, Please renew my mind by the Power of Your Holy Spirit so that Your life-giving words may cause me to obey You in all I do and say. Amen***

Thursday

## SELF SEEKING WILL SLIP AWAY

The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous makes this statement: *“Putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done, we resolutely looked for our own mistakes. Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking, and frightened?”* Also, included in the promises of AA is the Eighth Promise which begins with, *“Self-seeking will slip away.”* What is self-seeking?

We are all aware that selfish behaviour is very much involved in dysfunctional behaviour and an addictive lifestyle. We think about our own needs and don't care much about the needs of others. Self-seeking may cause us to do some things that seem considerate and helpful to others, but underneath the action is a desire to get something out of it for ourselves. It could be as simple as the desire for recognition and praise to build our self-esteem. It could also be more sinister with someone using what seems like good behaviour to manipulate a situation for their own selfish desires and goals.

***For those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury.*** (Romans 2:8 ESV)

God is love, and God calls us to live in truth and love. One of the descriptions of what love is NOT is, self-seeking.

***It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.*** (1 Corinthians 13:5 NIV)

It's time to give up the tunnel vision of first looking to our own interests and, only when it is convenient, looking to the interests of others. Most important, it is time to give our energy and attention to God's interests, because we will then experience the blessing of right relationship with Him and with others.

***Prayer: Heavenly Father, You call me to live beyond the deceit of self-seeking. You want me to experience great joy and contentment and so from today, help me to follow the path of honouring You by considering the needs of others before my own. Amen***

FRIDAY

## WHAT DOES “ENTIRELY READY” LOOK LIKE

In Step-6 we say we are “entirely ready” to have God remove all the character defects we have listed in our fearless moral inventory. We are willing for God to remove our defective old self, which was controlled by our lustful desires, so we can live as a new person controlled by the Spirit of God and operating in the will of God.

***You were told that your foolish desires will destroy you and that you must give up your old way of life with all its bad habits. Let the Spirit change your way of thinking and make you into a new person. You were created to be like God, and so you must please him and be truly holy.*** (Ephesians 4:22-24 CEV)

Being entirely ready to start afresh is the key to Step 6. We are making a complete life change. We have been travelling roads that are familiar to us and now say we are entirely ready to travel roads that are unfamiliar. We do not travel alone for God will always be with us, and the Holy Spirit will guide, direct, and teach us everything we need to be successful in our new life in recovery.

***You said to me, “I will point out the road that you should follow. I will be your teacher and watch over you.*** (Psalm 32:8 CEV)

When we say we are entirely ready to have God remove our defects of character we need to be sure that we are not making room for some to stay. Often pride loitering within us, will tell us that one or more of our characteristics are OK, because that is just who we are. We need to be totally honest with ourselves about what is harmful to others and ask God to remove it.

***You are God’s people, so don’t let it be said that any of you are immoral or indecent or greedy.*** (Ephesians 5:3 CEV)

***Prayer: Gracious God, I ask You to show me what I need to let go of and be willing to do so. Also, strengthen me to follow Your principles as I navigate my new life with You in recovery. Amen***

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Weekend

## RECOVERING A LIFE OF RELATIONSHIP

God invites us to a relationship with Him, so we can know His principles for living right, and then set healthy boundaries in our relationships with others. God wants us to utilize the gifts and talents He has given us to help others. It’s only as we reach out and serve others that we will get to know ourselves and the unique gifts and talents we have been given. This is life – the recovered life.

***What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us.*** (1 Corinthians 2:12 NLT)

God never intended us to live in isolation. His plan is for humans to live in relationship with Him and with each other. Isolation may be more familiar to us, but with God’s help, we can learn to maintain good relationships with others. God wants to reveal our true self and help us excel in serving others.

***For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don’t use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love.*** (Galatians 5:13 NLT)

We need the continued care and guidance of God to learn how to come alongside people and work co-operatively towards common goals. Trying to figure things out on our own is seldom the most productive way to go. We need to let go of the fear of making mistakes or looking stupid and learn to ask for help. Rather than running away in hurt and anger, God wants us to learn to communicate our feelings, so others can better understand and offer forgiveness where it is needed.

***If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.*** (James 1:5 NLT)

***Prayer: Loving God, Help me to move from isolation and hiding behind walls to walking in healthy supportive relationships. Strengthen my resolve to work through any barriers that surface so my relationships with others will grow and mature. Amen***

# LIFE WITH GOD IN RECOVERY DAILY MEDITATIONS



Week 33

Monday

## APPROVAL SEEKING

All of us like to be appreciated when we have acted wisely or done a good job. The Bible tells us that after Jesus allowed John the Baptist to baptize Him, God spoke and said that He was well pleased with Jesus. God is an encourager and is pleased with us when we choose to follow His principles in all our affairs.

***And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.*** (Matthew 3:17 NIV)

In the above scenario, Jesus did not seek His Father’s approval, it was freely given. Often when we have received no encouragement or appreciation for a wise decision we have made, or a task we have completed with much effort, we are offended that no one took the time to say, “well done”. Because our efforts were not acknowledged, we felt the good we did was not valued, and rejection and self-pity flooded our thinking.

***Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.*** (Hebrews 10:35-36 ESV)

In the past we served our own selfish desires until our lives became unmanageable. Now we are beginning to make wise decisions, and we want others to notice. We should not be discouraged when we feel the need for approval, instead we should look to the One who sees all things and tell Him what is going on within us. God will comfort and strengthen us in our time of need, and we will grow stronger in the knowledge of His ways if we do not give up.

***He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way. Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long.*** (Psalm 25:9, 5 ESV)

For a time, we acted totally in self-interest, now we are learning God’s ways, and in time, God’s approval will be enough.

***Prayer: Loving God, Help me to appreciate what others do as they minister in Your name, and let my heart be satisfied with Your approval of what I do, knowing that You are pleased with me. Amen***