

Daily Readings and Inspirations December 9

View today's readings from AA's "Daily Reflections", Hazelden's "Twenty-Four Hours A Day", NA's "Just For Today", Hazelden's "Walk In Dry Places", Hazelden's "Keep It Simple", "Each Day a New Beginning" daily meditations for women, Melody Beattie's "Journey to the Heart" and "More Language of Letting Go", Hazelden's "One More Day", Hazelden's "A Day At A Time", "Father Leo's Daily Meditation", AA's "As Bill Sees It" and more.

December 9

Daily Reflections

LOVE WITH NO PRICE TAG

When the Twelfth Step is seen in its full implication,
it is really talking about the kind of love that has no price tag on it.

TWELVE STEPS AND TWELVE TRADITIONS, p. 106

In order for me to start working the Twelfth Step, I had to work on sincerity, honesty, and to learn to act with humility. Carrying the message is a gift of myself, no matter how many years of sobriety I may have accumulated.

My dreams can become reality. I solidify my sobriety by sharing what I have received freely. As I look back to that time when I began my recovery, there was already a seed of hope that I could help another drunk pull himself out of his alcoholic mire. My wish to help another drunk is the key to my spiritual health. But I never forget that God acts through me. I am only His instrument. Even if the other person is not ready, there is success, because my effort in his behalf has helped me to remain sober and to become stronger. To act, to never grow weary in my Twelfth

Step work, is the key. If I am capable of laughing today, let me not forget those days when I cried. God reminds me that I can feel compassion!

Twenty-Four Hours A Day

A.A. Thought For The Day

The way of A.A. is the way of fellowship. We have read a good deal about fellowship and yet it is such an important part of the A.A. program that it seems that we cannot think too much about it. Human beings were not meant to live alone. A hermit's life is not a normal or natural one. We all need to be by ourselves at times, but we cannot really live without the companionship of others. Our natures demand it.

Our lives depend largely upon it. The fellowship of A.A.

seems to us to be the best in the world. Do I fully appreciate what the fellowship of A.A. means to me?

Meditation For The Day

We are all seeking something, but many do not know what they want in life. They are seeking something because they are restless and dissatisfied, without realizing that faith in God can give an objective and a purpose for their lives.

Many of us are at least subconsciously seeking for a Power greater than ourselves because that would give a meaning to our existence. If you have found that Higher Power, you can be the means of leading others aright, by showing them that their search for a meaning to life will end when they find faith and trust in God as the answer.

Prayer For The Day

I pray that my soul will lose its restlessness by finding rest in God. I pray that I may find peace of mind in the thought of God and His purpose for my life.

As Bill Sees It

Carrying the Message, p. 192

The wonderful energy the Twelfth Step releases, by which it carries our message to the next suffering alcoholic and finally translates the

Twelve Steps into action upon all our affairs, is the payoff, the magnificent reality of A.A.

Walk In Dry Places

Fixing things that aren't broken

Self-acceptance.

At the beginning of our AA sobriety, we were reminded that we were not reformers. Yet we sometimes have a tendency to want to "reform" ourselves or others after we've established sobriety.

This can become a practice of "fixing things that aren't broken". We may not realize it, but many things in our lives and personalities were always all right, all along. In believing that we should be changed, we may be taking on the opinions of someone else. There might be no need for change at all.

We also may be trying to please people who disapproved of us. Perhaps we're trying to obtain the affection of a parent who always rejected us. But if we're already on a spiritual path and are living rightly, there's no need for change. We'd be trying to fix something that isn't broken.

I'll accept myself and others as we are today. We are not out to reform anyone, including ourselves.

Keep It Simple

There is no stronger bond of friendship than a mutual enemy.--Frankfort Moore.

A.A. is a fellowship united against the same enemy--alcoholism. Our bonds give us strength to recover. We may not even know each other's last name, but we'll do anything to help each other stay sober. Our illness has taken much. But it has also given us much. We have millions of new friends. Almost anywhere in the world, we can find a member of our fellowship. Our new way of life depends on the strength of the fellowship. We should do nothing to weaken it. When you don't feel like going to a meeting--go, not only for yourself but for the sake of the fellowship. It truly needs you.

Prayer for the Day: Higher Power, You have given me A. A. Now help me to keep it going. A.A. needs me, just as I need A.A. Help me give even when I don't want to.

Action for the Day: Today, I'll give back to the program. I'll call a new member, volunteer to put on a meeting, or make the coffee."

Each Day a New Beginning

To do nothing is failure. To try, and in the trying you make some mistakes and then you make some positive changes as a result of those mistakes, is to learn and to grow and to blossom. --Darlene Larson Jenks

Life is a process, one that is continuously changing. And with each change, we are offered unexpected opportunities for growth. Change is what fosters our development as women. It encourages us to risk new behavior and may even result in some mistakes. Fortunately, no mistakes can seriously hinder us. In fact, most mistakes give us an additional opportunity to learn.

Where we stand today is far removed from our position last year, or even last week. Each and every moment offers us new input that influences any decision from this moment forward. The process that we're participating in guarantees our growth as long as we remain conscious of our opportunities and willingly respond to them. We can be glad that the life process is, in fact, never static. always moving, always inviting us to participate fully.

I will have the courage to make a mistake today. It's a promise of growth.

NA Just For Today

Listening

"This ability to listen is a gift and grows as we grow spiritually. Life takes on a new meaning when we open ourselves to this gift."

Basic Text pg. 102

Have you ever watched two small children carry on a conversation? One will be talking about purple dragons while the other carries on about the discomfort caused by having sand in one's shoes. We sometimes encounter the same communication problems as we learn to listen to others. We may struggle through meetings, trying desperately to hear the person sharing while our minds are busy planning what we will say when it's our turn to speak. In conversation, we may suddenly realize that our answers have nothing to do with the questions we're being asked. They are, instead, speeches prepared while in the grip of our self-obsession.

Learning how to listen - really listen - is a difficult task, but one that's not beyond our reach. We might begin by acknowledging in our replies what our conversational partner is saying. We might ask if there is anything we can do to help when someone expresses a problem. With a little practice, we can find greater freedom from self-obsession and closer contact with the people in our lives.

Just for today: I will quiet my own thoughts and listen to what someone else is saying.

Today's Gift

Faith is the seamstress who mends our torn belief who sews the hem of childhood trust and clips the threads of grief.

--Joan Walsh Anglund

A seamstress takes large pieces of material and cuts them to size. Then, with the help of needle and thread and buttons, she goes to work to create a finished piece. Sometimes, in the beginning, it is hard to imagine a finished product. But the seamstress believes it is possible and goes to work on it.

Faith is like a seamstress. Faith is what can pull all the unfinished pieces of life into some sort of order. Faith is what lets us know we are all right even when life doesn't seem to make sense. We all need the faith to believe our skills and dreams, and even our heartaches can be sewn into a shape that is beautiful and useful.

Our faith is the seamstress who guides the needle, mends the tears, and helps create a shape and meaning to our lives.

How can I show my faith today?

Touchstones

That it will never come again is what makes life so sweet. --Emily Dickinson

Life seems to be a continuous pattern of getting committed to things and having to let go - falling in love and losing the one we love, developing a job skill and having to change careers, caring for our children and letting them go off into the world. This is the rhythm of life, and our spiritual growth teaches us to make peace with it. Participating fully in the rhythm is how we become whole men. As addicts and codependents, we used our gambling, overspending, drugs, sex, work, or caretaking of others to avoid the pain of making deeper relationships and to avoid the grief over losing them.

Avoiding commitments and staying uninvolved may keep us safe from risks. They also keep us near our dangerous old patterns. Our program works when we can freely let ourselves go. First, we commit to our recovery program with no reservations. Then, in our increasing sanity we gradually let ourselves go in other attachments. We know we face losses as part of life. We will have the strength to grieve them and move on.

God, give me the inner-liberty today to let go of myself and care.

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Where we stand today is far removed from our position last year, or even last week. Each and every moment offers us new input that influences any decision from this moment forward. The process that we're participating in guarantees our growth as long as we remain conscious of our opportunities and willingly respond to them. We can be glad that the life process is, in fact, never static. Always moving, always inviting us to participate fully.

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The Language Of Letting Go

Asking for Help

It's okay to ask for help.

One of the most absurd things we do to ourselves is not asking for the help we need from a friend, a family member, our Higher Power, or the appropriate resource.

We don't have to struggle through feelings and problems alone. We can ask for help from our Higher Power and for support and encouragement from our friends.

Whether what we need is information, encouragement, a hand, a word, a hug, someone who will listen, or a ride, we can ask. We can ask people for what we need from them. We can ask God for what we need from God.

It is self-defeating to not ask for the help we need. It keeps us stuck. If we ask long and hard enough, if we direct our request to the right source, we'll get the help we need.

There is a difference between asking someone to rescue us and asking someone in a direct manner for the help we need from him or her. We can be straightforward and let others choose whether to help us or not. If the answer is no, we can deal with that.

It is self-defeating to hint, whine, manipulate, or coerce help out of people. It is annoying to go to people as a victim and expect them to rescue us. It is healthy to ask for help when help is what we need.

"My problem is shame," said one woman. "I wanted to ask for help in dealing with it, but I was too ashamed. Isn't that crazy?"

We who are eager to help others can learn to allow ourselves to receive help. We can learn to make clean contracts about asking for and receiving the help we want and need.

Today, I will ask for help if I need it - from people and my Higher Power. I will not be a victim, helplessly waiting to be rescued. I will make my request for help specific, to the point, and I will leave room for the person to choose whether or not to help me. I will not be a martyr any longer by refusing to get the help I deserve in life - the help that makes life simpler. God, help me let go of my need to do everything alone. Help me use the vast Universe of resources available to me.

I have the right to have my needs met. In order to have them met, I am expressing them to the people who can help me today. --Ruth Fishel

Journey To The Heart

Claim Your Own Life

Claiming our own lives creates fulfillment and joy. We don't need to be controlled. We don't deserve to be repressed or stifled. We don't have to let anyone convince us that we do. We can trust ourselves. We know what we need, we know what we yearn for- we long to be set free.

What once seemed so overwhelming- creating and taking responsibility for our lives- wasn't really so. It was our belief that we couldn't do it, couldn't handle it, couldn't be trusted that made it so. We created our own prison by believing we were trapped, stuck. We became controlled by believing others knew better than we did what was best for us. We were afraid to take responsibility for our choices, so we gave up our power.

Now it's time to step out, leave our prison of fear. We can take responsibility for our lives. We can take responsibility for what we create. We don't have to be afraid of making a mistake or doing something wrong. If we create a situation we don't like, we can create something different. We're free to create the life we want.

We're free now to claim our own lives and create fulfillment and joy. We always have been.

More Language Of Letting Go

Discover a sense of wonder and awe

After lunch at Paradise Cove, one of our favorite places to eat, my friend and I went for a walk along the beach. Suddenly he bent down and picked up a little purple ball with spines all over it. "Look," he said, "a sea urchin!" It was just an empty shell, but the purple was glowing, almost the color of amethyst. Neither of us had ever seen an urchin lying on the beach before. We touched it and debated whether we should take it home and put it on a shelf.

"Why don't we leave it here," he said. "Some kids will find it, and they can take it home. We've got enough stuff lying around."

As soon as he put the treasure back on the sand, two children and their mother rounded the point in front of us. The oldest child, a girl about twelve, was curious and delighted when we called her over and handed her the little purple ball. Soon her brother and her mom crowded around. The boy couldn't wait to touch the urchin's tiny spines. My friend and I were both smiling as we walked back to the car.

Two of the sweetest experiences in life are discovering new things and sharing those things with someone else. Be aware of the new and exciting things that come into your life. They don't have to be that big to give you a sense of delight. Enjoy them, learn from them, play with them. And then, for an even greater experience, share them with a friend.

God, help me discover a sense of wonder and awe about life. Then help me pass that feeling on to someone else.

A Day at a Time

Reflection For The Day

"Difficulties are God's errands, and when we are sent upon them, we should esteem it a proof of God's confidence."

-Beecher

I've come to realize that my past troubles were really of my own making. Although I hardly thought so at the time, I was a primary example of what The Program calls "self-will run riot." Today, I'll accept my difficulties as sign posts to growth, and as evidence of God's confidence in me. Do I believe that God will never give me more than I can handle?

Today I Pray

May I believe strongly that God has confidence in me to handle my troubles, that the difficulties I must face are in direct proportion to my strength and ability to bear up and keep a cool head in a crisis. May I also understand that it is my faith in God which keeps me from crumbling.

Today I Will Remember

God has faith in me, because I have faith in God.

One More Day

To see the goal of life as "winning" forces us to see other people as competitors, threats to our happiness. For us to "win," they have to "lose."

- Harold Kushner

Our thinking is healthier when we see our goals as individual accomplishments, not as outdoing someone else. Others don't have to get less or be less in order for us to feel good about ourselves.

Rather than, "I beat someone out of a job," we need to understand that it's not a contest, but a matter of placing the most qualified person in a new position. We all have different skills, and it is usually the skill, not the person, that is recognized or rewarded. The person who possesses the needed skill is not necessarily better, nicer, or more worthwhile - even when that person is us. In accepting that, we are better able to work toward our personal goals without fear of competition.

The only winning I pursue is meeting my goals.

Food For Thought

Developing Our Potential

Abstinence is the key to developing our potential. For years, our illness has probably controlled our life and reduced our ability to function. Since so much of our energy was tied up in the mental obsession with food and the physical effects of overeating, we were unable to develop the talents and abilities we possessed.

Getting in touch with a Higher Power gives us contact with the source of our potential. Our self-centeredness kept us from believing in our capacity to be activated by a Power greater than ourselves. When we see and hear of the results produced by working the OA program, we develop faith in our own buried talents.

When food controlled our lives, we were using only a very small percentage of our actual potential for work, recreation, and relationships with other people. Through abstinence from compulsive overeating, we discover strengths, abilities, and energies we never knew we had!

Direct my efforts. Lord.

One Day At A Time

~ LIFE ~

Life is the movie you see through your own unique eyes.

It makes little difference what's happening out there.

It's how you take it that counts.

Dennis Waitley in "The Winner's Edge"

Life is a very precious resource. Everyone has a different interpretation of reality, and people who are happier in life make the most of what they have been given, no matter how good or bad it may seem at the time.

Everything happens for a reason. Although we may not understand something at first, we must seize the moment and make use of every single second that our Higher Power has blessed us with. Enjoy all the good times that you deserve, but remember to accept those down times for all the lessons that you will learn, too. It is important to remember the Serenity Prayer and keep on going.

Make the most of each day but remember to stop and smell the flowers along the way. Today only happens once.

One Day at a Time . . .

Life is not a dress rehearsal, so have a good day, unless you have other plans.

Natalie

Hour To Hour - Book - Quote

We need to have our spiritual program replenished daily, by going to meetings and practicing the principles we are learning. Sometimes we need to replenish hourly. We replenish through prayer and service.

Thank you God, as I understand You, for the wealth of spiritual principles available for me to use.

Transformation

Count me in. Whatever are my talents, my usefulness; wherever you see me fitting into your grand scheme, God . . . place me there. I am willing to open my heart to your guidance. I am built to be part of this moment of transformation. I see a better world in my mind's eye and I know that others see it too. Connect me with those people who wish to quietly usher in a new world. Together we can push through the eye of the needle - together we can help it happen.

We are transforming together

- Tian Dayton PhD

Pocket Sponsor - Book - Quote

Do not be hung up on what you ought to be, what you were supposed to be or what you were going to be. You will never have time to be what you are.

I am the best me there is.

"Walk Softly and Carry a Big Book" - Book

When we go too far, it is seldom in the right direction.

Time for Joy - Book - Quote

I have the right to have my needs met. In order to have them met, I am expressing them to the people who can help me today.

Alkiespeak - Book - Quote

Prayer is talking to God. Meditation is listening to Him. - Unknown origin.

AA Thought for the Day

Only One Reason I believe we are all sober and alive for only one reason: God has a job for us to do. I have also come to believe that I must please God first, myself second, and everybody else third.

When I can live and feel that way -- and it isn't all day every day -- things seem to work out.

When I try to run the show, everything goes to hell.

- Came to Believe . . . , p. 97

Thought to Ponder . . .

No God, no peace -- know God, know peace.

AA-related 'Alconym' . . .

G O D = Good Orderly Direction.

Father Leo's Daily Meditation

OLD

"Growing old isn't so bad when you consider the alternative."

-- Maurice Chevalier

What is the alternative? Not to change! To stay rooted in adolescence, youth, middle-age or whatever. Not to age is not to live, not to experience and not to grow spiritually.

An aspect of age, for which I am beginning to be grateful, is "comparison"; today I am able to look at the past and see the benefits of the present. Growth is measurable only through the tunnel of age. I suppose my fear of age is my basic fear of the

"unknown" ; fear of "unmanageability" and "powerlessness".

These words remind me of the spiritual program that teaches me to confidently place my life in the loving arms of God. If I am responsible in life, I will be responsible in old age.

Teach me to use the spiritual perspective that comes with the gift of age.

In you, O LORD, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame. Rescue me and deliver me in your righteousness; turn your ear to me and save me. Be my rock of refuge, to which I can always go; give the command to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress. Deliver me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the grasp of evil and cruel men. For you have been my hope, O Sovereign LORD, my confidence since my youth.

Psalms 71:1-5

"See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are."

1 John 3:1

Daily Inspiration

Do not waste any time disliking who you are because of something you can no longer do anything about. Lord, help me to forgive myself all shortcomings of the past that I still hold on to and rather make the very best of this moment.

We never really know how far reaching our influence will be. Lord, may Your loving kindness always flow through me.

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