

HOPE and HEALING

Gentle Daily Meditations
on Recovery for those in any
12-Step Program

Finding Relief on the Road Well Traveled...
One Day at a Time





February 16

HONESTY

Our powerlessness led us to do many things. One that seems consistent with almost everyone in recovery is that it became a habit to not be honest. We lied to friends, family, co-workers, and countless others. Most important, we lied to ourselves and to anyone and about anything that threatened to keep us from our acting out behaviors.

I like to eat. Most everyone does. Food can be one of the real pleasures of life. Unless one has no control over what they're eating or how much. For me it was sugar. Anything with sugar. And once I started eating something sugary, I rarely stopped until there was no more food left. On the rare occasions when I couldn't eat all the sugary food before me, I ate until I was uncomfortable.

I kind of had a feeling I had an issue with food. One day at a party, that became pretty clear. Two different people jokingly commented on how much I seemed to love the pies that had been set out. I know they didn't say these things with any animosity, but it hurt nonetheless. And when I got home, I ate the rest of some ice cream I had. Not because I was hungry. But because I was sad. I remember saying out loud to myself, "You're sad." I then thought about the words I'd just said and their double meaning. I was feeling sad because of the comments at the party, and I was a sad person who was eating only because they had uncomfortable feelings. That was the moment I became honest with myself and tried a few different food recovery programs. For me, Food Addicts Anonymous has been a good fit.

**Today I am honest with myself about my feelings and my intentions.
This honesty is the foundation of my recovery.**

NOTES

--



February 25

DO ONE THING

Addiction is a relentless, unwavering path. Recovery is just the opposite. Within the concept of 12-Step recovery, there are as many healing paths as there are people on them. So many that, for the newcomer in particular, it may be overwhelming.

There was a lot of drinking in my family. If it's true we learn what we grow up around, I learned how to not be in a healthy family unit. It wasn't that my drinking was a problem. I don't drink. I'd seen what it did to my parents and our family. But I was still clearly affected by my experience growing up.

As a young adult, I had many issues. I didn't trust authority figures. I didn't feel that I mattered. I avoided relationships. I was afraid of opening my heart only to have someone yank it out of my chest.

In college I met someone I really clicked with. We had similar pasts, parents who were drinkers. And our relationship was mostly good. But my partner started going to Adult Children of Alcoholics meetings and suggested that maybe that would be good for me and for our relationship. So I went. But when I first started going, I was confused both by the lack of a clear definition of sobriety and how to achieve it. I didn't know what to do.

Finally, someone in the program suggested I both do nothing and do one thing. Do nothing meant just keep coming to meetings and sit and listen. Do one thing meant just keep coming to meetings and sit and listen. So I did that. And now after some time, I've defined sobriety for me and the one thing I need to do each day to achieve and maintain it, which is still sit and listen – to myself, to my “fellows,” and to my Higher Power.

Today I will do at least one thing to continue my recovery.

NOTES

--

February 26



ASKING FOR HELP

Most of us are raised to be self-sufficient. Unfortunately, self-sufficiency isn't always the best – or most productive – way to go through life. This is especially true when it comes to recovery. We cannot do it on our own. If we could, we would. But we can't. So we ask for help. As has everyone in recovery before us.

Growing up, I tried team sports. But I didn't like them because, you know, people. I liked swimming. I liked tennis. I liked chess. These were things I could do on my own. And yes, I did have coaches who shared their experience both as competitors and in coaching others. But the truth is, I didn't often listen to my coaches. I preferred to do things my way.

After a tennis injury I became addicted to pharmaceuticals. I was so addicted to my drugs that I couldn't, and didn't want to, live my life without them. Then it got to the point where I didn't want to live my life with them. I had to ask for help, and gratefully someone pointed me in the direction of a Pills Anonymous meeting.

In recovery I've learned that asking for help is something anyone who wants to grow their skills and their life – inside recovery and out – does. There's no shame in it. And in my program, by asking for help and working with others, I found I was making connections that I would have never made with people I would have never met. Now I consider asking for help a "life hack," a way to constructively, efficiently, and lovingly make it through my day and grow my spirit in the process.

**I do not know everything. I do not have all the answers.
I reach out for others to help me learn, grow, and recover.**

NOTES

March 3

ISOLATION VS. CONNECTION



We've heard it said addiction is isolation and recovery is connection. In isolation, we are alone. In connection, we are joined by an army of support.

My drug use wasn't something I shared. Except with the people who enabled me to keep using drugs. I used a variety of drugs. I finally settled on meth. Methamphetamine. It wasn't my choice. Meth chose me. And once it had me, it wouldn't let go. The highs were great. They took away all my fear, fear I had about so many things in my life, particularly about how alone I was.

The last time I did meth I was at a club. I ran into someone I knew who was also in "my" club. We found a door into the basement. We went down there and got high, each of us with our own supply. The meth affected me like it always did; I got wired. My friend got really quiet. Finally, they fell asleep and stopped moving. I checked, and it didn't seem like there was any sign of life. No breathing. No movement when I touched them. I didn't know what to do. Except that I needed to get out of there. As I was heading out the front door, I told a bouncer that there was a person in the basement who didn't seem to be breathing. When he asked what I was doing in the basement, I kept walking. The following day someone said that the previous night a person had died in the basement of that club. I went to my first CMA – Crystal Meth Anonymous meeting – the next day. It was the first time I really felt not alone.

**When I feel alone in my recovery,
I remember that I am connected to many others traveling a similar path
who are eager to support me on my journey.**

NOTES



March 17

ONE DAY AT A TIME

Intellectually, we understand that we can only live our life one day at a time, that today is all we have. Yet, human nature prompts many of us to forget about today as we focus on tomorrow.

Today and tomorrow. They can be a delicate balancing act. Most of us act in ways today that bring about the greatest benefits for us today. Yet just as we ensure our financial and physical health tomorrow by what we do today, so too do we work our recovery program for spiritual health for both today and tomorrow.

If we were to chart our recovery on a day-to-day basis, we would discover that it's not dissimilar from a stock market chart over many years. Over time, yes, our recovery, if it is a regular part of our day, and the stock market will both show great progress. Yet in each case inevitably, there are days when there are downturns. In the stock market it may be because of political upheaval, weather, or changing technology. In our spiritual recovery, we have downturns when we become too self-centered or forget our program's spiritual principles.

But these "withdrawals" from our spiritual bank account can be more than offset by daily acts of kindness, honesty, and humility, and through regular prayer, meditation, and gratitude. And we can really add to our spiritual savings "portfolio" through service and sponsorship.

**The recovery work I do today helps safeguard me
against potential slips on days when I am most challenged.**

NOTES

--

April 19



DENIAL

There were countless indications that things weren't right in our life. At first, it was a random comment or mild harmful repercussion to our actions. In time, these pushbacks happened more frequently. And the consequences of our acting out grew darker. Eventually, we could not deny that something was very wrong in our life. And yet we did.

For some of us, it was only after hitting a “hard bottom” that we started our healing recovery journey. For others, it was the perpetual and unrelenting dis-ease that filled our days. Regardless, no matter what prompted it, we had to admit we were in trouble. And we needed help. Denial was not an option. Only recovery was.

When we started our recovery program, some of us did so with full force. We went to several meetings a week, we got a sponsor, and we worked the steps. For some of us, actively engaging with our recovery program took a bit longer. It was as though we thought, well, I'm sitting here. I'm listening to others. Maybe this will be enough. But this denial of the perilousness of our spiritual state was even more maddening to those who heard our story. Here we were, with recovery at our fingertips. And all we had to do was reach for it.

In time, all of us who kept coming back admitted to ourselves that we had no other choice. We were fighting a battle against a powerful force, our addiction, and the only way to overcome it was with an even greater force. Our program and our Higher Power.

I work my recovery program because if I do not, my addiction will overpower me.

NOTES

October 14



I'M FINE

“How you doing?” someone asks us. “I’m fine,” we answered reflexively. We didn’t want to tell the truth because it was too painful. We were living in addiction.

One of the things in recovery that surprises us to this day is that when someone asks how we’re doing, they really want to know. We can tell this by the measured cadence of the question asked with a direct look in our eyes. And if we were to ask, “Do you really want to know, or are you just asking?” They’d say, “I really want to know.”

Before recovery, when someone asked how we were doing, it was inevitably social lubricant - words to fill the empty space filled that was awkward silence. But in recovery, we appreciate the empty space. Silence is no longer awkward. And we don’t feel the need to fill it with actions or words. We can just live in it.

If someone in recovery answers “How you doing?” with “Fine,” we jokingly consider “fine” an acronym for “Feeling insecure, neurotic, and emotional.” Or some other similar, downbeat four-word phrase. Maybe they are fine. And maybe not. Regardless, we want to hear about it. Just as we’re so grateful that others in recovery want to hear our honest answer to “How you doing?”

**Today I share my true feelings with people I trust.
And I trust that people I care about will share their true feelings with me.**

NOTES



The Value of Daily Meditations in Recovery

All of the 366 daily meditations follow a consistent structure: a topic relevant to recovery, a reading, a closing affirmation, and a notes area for recording what these words bring to mind. Each entry offers an opportunity to pause and reflect.

Some reflections may resonate immediately. Others may not. But it will be rare for a reading not to prompt some awareness worth considering. Regardless, simply taking time to turn inward can be of value.

Recovery is not something we complete. It is something we practice. No matter where you are in your journey, or how you choose to move forward, we wish you hope and healing — one day at a time.