

CONTINUED TO TAKE PERSONAL INVENTORY

Life With God In Recovery

STEP TEN: CONTINUED TO TAKE PERSONAL INVENTORY



Step Ten – Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

We live in a world that says, “If it feels good do it.” For many of us, in our addiction, we ran after numerous destructive things to try to feel good. Now, in recovery, God invites you and I to measure our quality of life based on principles that He knows give true meaning and satisfaction to our daily living. Many practices that God prescribes, do not feed our “feel good fast” addictive emotions. We struggle to do what is right while favoring what is convenient. One of the purposes of a continual Step 10 inventory is to help us recognize our ongoing temptation to what we believe is a “softer, easier way of life”.

For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes, and he is the one to whom we are accountable. (Hebrews 4:12-13 NLT)

The founders of AA were careful to give us reasons and benefits of taking personal inventory: *A continuous look at our assets and liabilities, and a real desire to learn and grow by this means, are necessities for us. ... The emphasis on inventory is heavy only because a great many of us have never really acquired the habit of accurate self-appraisal. ... Learning daily to spot, admit, and correct these flaws is the essence of character-building and good living. An honest regret for harms done, a genuine gratitude for blessings received, and a willingness to try for better things tomorrow will be the permanent assets we shall seek.* (Excerpts from The Twelve by Twelves pages 88-95)

Watch out that you do not lose what we have worked so hard to achieve. Be diligent so that you receive your full reward. (2 John 8 NLT)

Our old ways of thinking and behaving are being replaced as we journey with God in our new life in recovery. Too many people attempt to piece together a new way of life based on the practices of others and things that seem to “work for us”. The word of God is clear that this way is not sufficient. The only way to build a new life is to study and follow God’s Word in the Bible, which is a blueprint for living. It is important to discipline ourselves to read the word of God and develop a habit of listening to God, rather than simply relying on our own thoughts. We need to learn God’s

principles for healthy living and allow those principles to reshape the way we think and act. Step Ten is about bringing our lives to the mirror of God's Word to assess how we are practicing His principles in all our ways.

Trust in the Lord and do good; live in the land and be safe. Seek your happiness in the Lord, and he will give you your heart's desire. Give yourself to the Lord; trust in him, and he will help you. (Psalm 37:3-5a GNT)

It is amazing to see what a human being can achieve through consistent disciplined effort. How many times have we watched athletes and marveled at the ease with which they perform their sport? We know that they developed their ability through rigorous training, the discipline that sets the athlete apart from the spectator. What are we doing from day to day, even moment by moment, to train ourselves to hear and respond to the calling of God in our lives? Are we praying and reading God's word, allowing it to challenge, stretch, and develop us? We may experience some discomfort in the fact that we are not where we would like to be. However, if we choose to practice these disciplines, regardless of how we feel, we will soon achieve a spiritual ease of living at peace with God, with ourselves, and with our neighbor.

But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it. Exercise daily in God—no spiritual flabbiness, please! Workouts in the gymnasium are useful, but a disciplined life in God is far more so, making you fit both today and forever. (James 1:22, 25 NLT, 1 Timothy 4:7-8 MSG)

Spot-check inventories, daily inventories, and periodic check-up inventories are all practices we are encouraged to use to maintain spiritual, emotional, and relational health.

SPOT CHECK INVENTORY: In each situation where we begin to experience things not going well, we pause and note what's right and what's wrong. What are we feeling? What's going on beneath the feeling? What are we expecting? What is God's direction in what is going on? Are we living the Golden Rule in this moment, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you?"

DAILY INVENTORY: At the end of each day we talk with God about the events of our day and listen for His encouragement, His correction, and His instruction. Where we need forgiving we ask for and receive it from God. Where we notice our good intentions, good thoughts, good actions, we note them and give thanks.

PERIODIC CHECK-UP INVENTORY: On a regular basis we take some time alone or in the company of a sponsor or adviser to make a careful review of our progress. An annual or semi-annual house cleaning of the heart will help us recognize growth as well as defects in need of attention. Some people like to take a day or more, and retreat to a quiet place for a time of prayer, meditation, and review of their lives.

The Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; though he may stumble, he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him with his hand. (Psalm 37:23-24 NIV)

God has a plan for our lives which will bring satisfaction, meaning, and joy. As we plot our course, God will direct our steps and we will be enriched by goodness and love through each step of the journey. Our Step Ten inventory will help keep us on the path as we work out God's good, pleasing and perfect plan for our lives.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTON AND DISCUSSION

1. Am I continuing to take personal inventory as I reflect on God's principles for my life?
2. When, and in which circumstances, do I hear the addictive voice within me enticing me to an "If it feels good, do it" way of life?
3. What am I doing on a regular basis, to understand and live the principles for life as defined in the Bible?
4. How am I seeking to respond to God's directives?
5. In what ways am I challenging myself to grow in the new habit of surrendering to God?

Heavenly Father, Thank You for loving and caring for me. Help me to draw closer to You as I follow Your plan for my life. I ask You to shine your light into any dark areas of my heart and help me sort through my motives and actions. When my actions or attitude differ from what You require of me, help me to promptly re-align my ways in accordance with Yours. I ask You to lead me along the path of peace and love. Help me to be conscious of how I treat others. Help me to be compassionate and self-giving in all my relationships. I desire to be a person who honours You in all I do. AMEN