

The bottom line is expressed very well in the 12 & 12...(95:0) “ 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. Having so considered our day, not omitting to take due note of things well done, and having searched our hearts with neither fear nor favor, we can truly thank God for the blessings we have received and sleep in good conscience.”

The Morning Meditation

The 12 & 12 says... (98:2) “ As we have seen, self-searching is the means by which we bring new vision, action and grace to bear upon the dark and negative side of our natures. It is a step in the development of that kind of humility that makes it possible for us to receive God’s help. Yet it is only a step. We will want to go further.” What do you think is the “further” Bill Wilson is talking about? Let’s take a look...

To start with I say the following prayer as soon as possible in the morning. This helps me from getting too far off track with my day from the very start...

“God please direct my thinking and keep my thoughts divorced from self – pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives. Lord, please keep my thought life clear from wrong motives and help me employ my mental faculties, that my thought-life might be placed on a higher plane, the plane of inspiration.” (86:2)

Now, I am ready to do the first two items.

- 1.) I think about the 24 hours ahead – Here I meditate about what I would like to be and I think about what God would want me to be. (a better husband, better father, better A.A. member, better employee, better friend, etc.). I think about what God wants me to be, what I am to do and how I am to live His will. I come up with my vision of what I believe is God’s will is for me today. I do this by asking myself questions. I ask myself “what can I do today, to be a better father?” then I think about what would God want me to do today, to be a better father? Next, I ask myself “How can I be a better husband today?” then I think about what would God want Me to do today, to be a better husband? Etc., Etc., Etc... This process gives me the meditative vision of God’s will in my life, which our program requires.
 - 2.) I consider my plans for the day - I already have a list of amends from last night’s 10th/11th step evening review. I plan to start out my day with yesterday’s list of amends. Then, I ask myself, what else would God want me to do today? I think about, with God’s help, how I will fulfill my list of amends and I think about how I can avoid any repeats with my behavior for today. Once again, as in the first instruction, I focus my mind on my vision of God’s will for me today. Remember, It is only after I have cleaned up my mess from yesterday, that I can make plans for the rest of today...
 - 3.) Now I say the prayers on my prayer sheet (the prayers which come from the Big Book, see below) and I end up my prayer and meditation with some meditation books. (A.A.’s daily reflection’s, 2 pages of- As Bill Sees It, Emmett Fox’s daily meditations, The runners Bible, Thomas Merton- spiritual direction, A page or two of The recovery Bible, and Experiencing God etc.)
 - 4.) If your prayer life seems to be stale and you can’t seem to get new life into your prayers you may want to try this... Read from pages 84-88, start where it says “This thought brings us to step ten...” and turning every sentence into a prayer. It looks like this... “God please help me to continue to take personal inventory and help me to continue to set right any new mistakes as I go along. Father, help me to commence this way of living...etc.” This will help you because it keeps our prayers fresh and it helps you to make new prayers with the material every day. I also use some “key” words to remind me of other prayers. “resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help” sends me to pg 164:2 to the 12th Step prayer. “Love and Tolerance” sends me back to 83:1 for the 9th Step prayer. “memorize a few set prayers” reminds me to say the 3rd and 7th Step prayers.
- Steps 10 & 11 is where you get to expand your spirituality – There are lots of program meditation books and other spiritual books I have used in the past. These include... The 24 hour book, The A.A. grapevine, which I use when I am traveling. The Grapevine is called “our meeting in print” because when you are on the road you may not be able to catch a meeting. Our history books are great too like... A.A. comes of age, Dr. Bob and The Good Old Timers, Pass It On, Language of the Heart, Came to Believe, The best of the Grapevine, Living Sober etc. As I have already said, there are hundreds of resources for you to use (Eckhart Tolle-The Power of Now, Lau Tsu-Tao Te Ching, Don Miguel Ruiz – The Four Agreements etc.) and it is your personal experience with your higher power that you want to expand and enhance as you grow spiritually.

During my morning meditation, as a minimum, I say the following prayers:

The big book gives us these prayers...

“God, please direct my thinking today and keep my thoughts divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives.

Father, please keep my thought life clear from wrong motives and please help me employ my mental faculties, that my thought-life might be placed on the higher plane of inspiration and help me pay attention to this vital sixth sense. Lord, Please show me how I can best serve thee – Thy will (not mine) be done.” (85:2 & 86:2& 85:1)

“God, I offer myself to Thee-to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always!”(63:2)

“My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding.”(76:2)

“God, please show me how to find Patience, Tolerance, Kindness and Love in my Heart, my Mind and my Soul. Father, please help me show these attributes to my family and to those about me. Help me lord to keep their happiness uppermost in mind”(83:1)

“God, please remove from me: selfishness, dishonesty, resentment and fear. If these feelings crop up, help me to immediately share these feelings with others. Help me quickly make amends to others for my wrongs, that I might live serenely with them. Lord, Help me to not think of myself, instead, help me think of others and help me be loving and tolerant toward them. Father, Keep me spiritually fit today, by helping me to not fight with anything or anyone - especially alcohol and please God, help me not to drink alcohol today.” (84:2)

“God, should I find myself agitated, doubtful or indecisive today, please give me inspiration, help me to have an intuitive thought or a decision about this problem I face. Father, help me not to struggle, instead, help me to relax and take it easy. Help me know what I should do and keep me mindful, that you are running the show. Lord, free me from my bondage of self. Thy will be done always.” (86:3 & 87:3)

“God please help me live the twelve steps, twelve traditions and all the principles of A.A. in my entire life. Remove from me my character defects, specifically profanity, dishonesty, arrogance, false pride, sarcasm, _____ and fear. Watch over me, protect me and care for me. Give me the strength, Courage and faith I need to do thy bidding. Keep me mindful of thy presence Lord and help me know you better.”

“God, please show me all through this day, what my next step is to be and please Grace me Father with whatever I need to take care of the problems in my life today. I ask especially Lord, that you free me from self-will and fear. Father, please show me today how I might help the man who is still sick and suffering from alcoholism. Amen” (87:1, 164:2)

During times of fear and agitation I have found it helpful to pay close attention to my breathing. At the same time I find it soothing to repeat a simple prayer, over and over, as I watch my breathing. Some like to use the prayer of St. Francis Assisi or the serenity prayer but, I prefer a simpler prayer...as I breath in, I think to myself “God in” and as I exhale I think “fear out”. It may seem simple but, in times of trouble or indecision, I think you will find it a very effective and comforting meditation.

This is the prayer composed by Bill and recited during morning ‘quiet time’ P.I.O. (265:1)

“Oh lord, we thank Thee that Thou art, that we are from everlasting to everlasting. Blessed be Thy holy name and all Thy benefactions to us of light, of love and of service. May we find and do Thy will in good strength, in good cheer today. May Thy ever-present grace be discovered by family and friends – those here and those beyond – by our Societies throughout the world, by men and women everywhere, and among those who must lead in these troubled times. Oh Lord, we know Thee to be all wonder, all beauty, all glory, all power, all love. Indeed, Thou art everlasting love. Accordingly, Thou has fashioned for us a destiny passing through Thy many mansions, ever in more discovery of Thee and in no separation between ourselves.”

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