

Celebrate Recovery

Lesson 20 Daily Inventory

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Principle 7: Reserve a Daily time with God for self-examination. Bible reading, and prayer in order to know God and his will for my life and to gain the power to follow His will.

Step 10 We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

1 Corinthians 10:12 12 If you think you are standing strong, be careful not to fall.

Introduction



Tonight we want to focus on the how-to of Step 10. But first, I would like to see how you did with your seven days of Step 10 journaling. I know for many of you it was the first experience in writing down your thoughts on a daily basis. I thought it would be interesting to randomly call on some of you to come up here and read them for the whole group. Just kidding!

But, it is important to recap our day in written form — the good and the bad, the successes and the times when we blew it. Here's why:

1 When you write down areas in which you owe amends, it will help you to see if patterns are developing, so that you can identify them and work on them with the help of Jesus Christ and your sponsor.

2 You can keep the amends you owe to a very "short list." As soon as you write down an issue you can make a plan to PROMPTLY offer your amends. After you make the amends you can cross it off in your journal.

Inventory

Some of you may have had trouble getting started writing in your journal. Let me give you three hints that will help you get started putting the ink on the paper.

1 Start off by writing down just one thing that happened that particular day for which you are thankful. Just one thing can get you started, and it will also help you sleep better that night.

2 Ask your accountability partner/sponsor to hold you accountable for writing in your journal each night.

3 This is the one that really works for me! Memorize Galatians 5:22 –23, the "fruit of the Spirit": "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

Daily ask yourself any of these questions to prompt your writing, starting each question with the word "today":

- How did I **show love to others**? Did I act in an unloving way toward anyone?
- **Did others see in me the joy of having a personal relationship with the Lord? If not, why not?**
- How was **my serenity, my peace**? Did anything happen that caused me to lose it? What was my part in it?
- **Was I patient** (forbearing)? What caused me to lose my patience? Do I owe anyone amends?

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- Would anyone say that I **was kind/good**? In what ways did I act unkind?
- How was my **faithfulness**? Did I keep my word with everyone?
- **How was my gentleness and self-control**? Did I lose my temper, speak a harsh or unkind word to someone?

As we work Step 10 and Principle 7, we begin the journey of applying what we have discovered in the first nine steps. **We humbly live daily—in reality, not denial.** We have done our best to amend our past. Through God’s guidance, we can make choices about the emotions that affect our thinking and actions. We start to take action —**positive action** —**instead of constant reaction.**

In Principle 7 we desire to grow daily in our new relationship with Jesus Christ and others. Instead of attempting to be in control of every situation and every person we come in contact with, or spinning out of control ourselves, **we are starting to exhibit self-control**, the way God wants us to be. Remember “self under control” is what we are seeking. Self under God’s control is what we are striving for. God has provided us with a daily checklist for our new lifestyle. It’s called the “Great Commandment,” and it is found in *Matthew 22:37 – 40 where Jesus said, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart . . . soul and . . . mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” When you do your daily personal inventory, ask yourself, “Today, did my actions show what the second greatest commandment tells me to do? Did I love my neighbor (others) as myself?”*

As we live the two commandments by putting the principles and steps into action in our lives, we will become more like Christ. We will become doers of God’s Word, not hearers only. *James 1:22 says, “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.” Our actions need to be consistent with our talk. You may be the only Bible someone ever reads. That’s being a real “Living Bible.” That’s how the apostle Paul lived. He says in 1 Thessalonians 1:5 (TLB), “Our very lives were further proof to you of the truth of our message.” Others should see God’s truth shown in our lives.*

Step 10 does not say how often to take an inventory, but I would like to offer three suggestions that can help us keep on the right road, God’s road to recovery.

Do an Ongoing Inventory

We can keep an ongoing inventory throughout the day. The best time to admit we are wrong is the exact time that we are made aware of it. Why wait? Let me give you an example.

Yesterday afternoon, I snapped at my son. I was immediately faced with a choice. I could admit that I was wrong (“I shouldn’t have snapped at Johnny; all he wanted to do was play catch”) and make amends with him (“Johnny, I’m sorry for speaking so sharply; I was wrong”), or I could wait until later and risk rationalizing it away (“He saw I was busy; he had no right to ask me to play at that time”).

You don’t have to wait until you go home, cook dinner, watch TV, and then start your journal. If you do an ongoing inventory during the day, you can keep your amends list very short!

Do a Daily Inventory

At the end of each day, we look over our daily activities, the good and the bad. We need to search where we might have harmed someone or where we acted out of anger or fear. But once again, remember to keep your daily inventory balanced. Be sure to include the things that you did right throughout the day. The best way to do this is to journal. **I spend about fifteen**

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minutes just before I go to sleep, journaling my day's events, asking God to show me the wrongs that I have committed. Then, as promptly as I can the next morning, I admit them and make my amends.

Do a Periodic Inventory

I take a periodic inventory **about every three months**. I get away on a "mini retreat"! I would encourage you to try it. Bring your daily journal with you, and pray as you read through the last ninety days of your journal entries. Ask God to show you areas in your life that you can improve on in the next ninety days and celebrate the victories that you have made.

By taking an ongoing, a daily, and a periodic inventory we can work Step 10 to the best of our abilities. With God's help we can keep our side of the street clean.

Here are a few key verses to learn and follow for Step 10.

"Intelligent people think before they speak; what they say is then more persuasive" (Proverbs 16:23, GNT).

"Let no foul or polluting language, nor evil word nor unwholesome or worthless talk [ever] come out of your mouth, but only such [speech] as is good and beneficial to the spiritual progress of others" (Ephesians 4:29, AB).

"A wise, mature person is known for his understanding. The more pleasant his words, the more persuasive he is" (Proverbs 16:21, GNT).

"A word of encouragement does wonders!" (Proverbs 12:25, TLB)

"If I had the gift of being able to speak in other languages without learning them, and could speak in every language there is in all of heaven and earth, but didn't love others, I would only be making noise" (1 Corinthians 13:1, TLB).

Step 10 Daily Action Plan

1. Continue to take a daily inventory, and when you are wrong, promptly make your amends.
2. Summarize the events of your day in your journal.
3. Read and memorize one of the Principle 7a verses below

Work all steps and principles to the best of your ability. The key verse for this lesson is **Mark 14:38: "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."**

Let's close in prayer.

Dear God, thank You for today. Thank You for giving me the tools to work my program and live my life differently, centered in Your will. Lord, help me to make my amends promptly and ask for forgiveness. In all my relationships today help me to do my part in making them healthy and growing. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

Think Write Discuss

1. What are some of the advantages of each of the three types of inventories in your recovery? How can they help you to "be careful that you don't fall"?

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2. What do the following verses mean to you and how can they help you in this step?

“From a wise mind comes careful and persuasive speech” (Proverbs 16:23).

“Don’t use bad language. Say only what is good and helpful to those you are talking to, and what will give them a blessing” (Ephesians 4:29).

“The wise man is known by his common sense, and a pleasant teacher is the best” (Proverbs 16:21).

“Anxious hearts are very heavy but a word of encouragement does wonders!” (Proverbs 12:25).

“If I had a gift of being able to speak in other languages without learning them, and could speak in every language there is in all of heaven and Earth, but didn’t love others, I would only be making noise” (1 Corinthians 13:1).

“Watch with me and pray lest the Tempter overpower you. For though the spirit is willing enough, the body is weak” (Mark 14:38)

3. What is your daily action plan for Step 10?

4. What are the recurring events or issues for which you are constantly needing to make amends?

With your family?

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With your friends?

Those with whom you work?

With those in your church or recovery program?

Principle 7a Verses

“As God’s messenger I give each of you God’s warning: Be honest in your estimate of yourselves, measuring your value by how much faith God has given you” (Romans 12:3, TLB).

“Cling tightly to your faith in Christ and always keep your conscience clear, doing what you know is right” (1 Timothy 1:19, TLB).

“Cross-examine me, O Lord, and see that this is so; test my motives and affections too” (Psalm 26:2, TLB).

“We can justify our every deed but God looks at our motives” (Proverbs 21:2, TLB).

“A sensible man watches for problems ahead and prepares to meet them. The simpleton never looks, and suffers the consequences” (Proverbs 27:12, TLB).

“Keep a close watch on all you do and think. Stay true to what is right and God will bless you and use you to help others” (1 Timothy 4:16, TLB).

“So be careful. If you are thinking, ‘Oh, I would never behave like that’ – let this be a warning to you. For you too may fall into sin” (1 Corinthians 10:12, TLB).

“Come to terms quickly with your enemy before it is too late” (Matthew 5:25, TLB).

“My brothers and sisters, when you have many kinds of troubles, you should be full of joy, because you know that these troubles test your faith, and this will give you patience” (James 1:2-3, NCV).

“A relaxed attitude lengthens a man’s life; jealousy rots it away” (Proverbs 14:30, TLB).

Prayer

“Dear God, thank You for today. Thank You for giving me the tools to work my program and live my life differently, centered in Your will. Lord, help me to make my amends promptly and ask for forgiveness. In all my relationships today, help me to do my part in making them healthy and growing. In Jesus’ name I pray, Amen.”