

Al Kohallek Goes On A Forty-Day Serendipity Journey

DAY 10 - Today is _____

When you start your daily practice you may ask your Higher Power – “Cause me to have all the honesty, willingness and open-mindedness I may need here and now. I ask, for the guidance, love and wisdom that I need to work through this process and gain the most I can at this time. I am as willing as I can be to set aside everything I even think I know about this area, this way of life so that my chances for an open-mind and to be teachable are better and that I may realize Your Three Spiritual Gifts: Awakening to You, to be the love I am and to be the individual You created me as. Thank You.”

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INDEX FOR THIS DAY ACTION

1. Workbook assignment is to read Introduction To Step Four pages 43 - 45 Underline those things that were most useful for you and/or caused you to have questions. Write them down.
2. Today’s reading assignment from Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions is Step Four (pages 42 - 54) Average reading time 25 minutes. Underline those things that were most useful for you and/or caused you to have questions.
3. List the most important ideas you realized as a result of today’s reading; pages 42 – 54 in Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. How do these ideas directly relate to the area you are currently working this Forty Day Commitment? Give examples.

Today’s Mission Statement: *Today we begin by far the most demanding part of this 40-day Commitment. There will be a limited amount of reading but what there is, is important. Keep in mind we are looking for patterns, habits of thoughts and feelings, in other words, our personal “reality”. Change a habit and we change the rest of our life. While an individual event and experience, which seems to be separate or a one-time experience may be interesting , the patterns or habits they represent are far more valuable. Keep a separate page to list these habits of thoughts and feelings as you work through this process.*

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Introduction To Step Four

AN OVERVIEW - Each action you will be asked to take is part of a process to help you realize consciously, your personal “reality” through which most of your life experiences are filtered. This part of the process, Step Four, is but one part but a very important one. If we do not awaken to our little personal “reality” and take responsibility for our beliefs, habits of thoughts and feelings, we will most likely continue to experience our life on automatic.

INDIVIDUALS AND “REALITY” - It is important to identify the individuals which we shared our life with in both loving and harmful ways. *“Selfishness-self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles. Driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion, self-seeking, and self-pity, we step on the toes of our fellows and they retaliate.”* (P62 *Alcoholic Anonymous* – reprinted with permission). Of course we have a lot to do to heal our past relationships. However, it is even more vital to have our habits of thoughts and feeling, our rules/patterns, in other words our personal “reality” healed, changed or transformed. When this is done, it is not only for the past but more importantly for the present and the future.

PLAN OF ACTION - Action is the magic word, but you may say; “You are asking us to do a lot of work and it does not seem like magic.” If you do as good a job as you can, we can assure you a great deal of freedom and wisdom will come into your experience. Just follow the Format For A Step Inventory (p 46).

PERSONAL “REALITY” - The way we are using the word “pattern” is often called by many other names: Habits of thoughts and feelings – Inner Rules – Our personal “reality” - Our personal filter system - etc. Whatever one chooses to call these patterns it is important to know that these patterns determine most of our life experiences by the way we react to them. These patterns are always present; however we are not always conscious of them.

WHAT ABOUT RULES AND PATTERNS WORKSHEET - The purpose of this simple exercise (Rules/Patterns Worksheet) is to help you identify more of your patterns or the inner rules you live by, conscious or not. Once you do you have the right to choose once again to continue to use these habits or build new ones. Very often our conscious mind says yes to something we really want but something does or does not happen which keeps us from that wanted person, place or thing. It is very likely that we have some long forgotten rule/pattern we made up or went along with that is saying no to us. These rules/patterns will continue to run on automatic until we call them into question. One helpful thing you may try to overcome this is: When you say; “I really want this or to stop that” and you do not get this or stop that, it means that you have a contrary belief, rule/pattern that’s winning. The next time your conscious mind tells you one thing and you are experiencing another, try saying this; “ I must have a contrary rule/pattern telling me no, so let me see it.” When it comes to our consciousness you may choose to make a new decision about that rule/pattern and then turn it over to your Higher Power and affirm what you do want.

WE’VE GOT QUESTIONS - This workbook is filled with questions. The purpose of these questions is to get our personal “reality” to surface. This personal “reality” is made up of our habits of thoughts and feelings. There cannot be any long-term changes of conditions and causes without going to their source. In doing an inventory we want as complete and useful a list, report, record, evaluation, survey of our abilities, assets, and resources that make up our personal “reality” as we can come up with. If we want something other than another quick “fix”, we must go to the root of the problem - our con-

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sciousness at the habit level. This is the home of our personal “reality.” Since it is so important that we understand these basic principles, we will repeat them from time to time. Since our true healing will come by grace, we want to position ourselves in the very best place to receive it.

A NEW WAY OF LIFE - We are working to build a new way of living by which we may live life to its fullest. To do this, we must let go of our old, useless, harmful and limiting belief systems that are getting in the way of our realizing a Higher Power, a Higher Power that can and will do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. Finding the right questions and responding to them as honestly as we can, with as much courage as we can muster at the moment, will help us awaken to a Power Greater than ourselves. The problem is this; if our personal “reality” is not changed, then nothing has really changed. We sooner or later fall back in the some old “rut”

WHAT’ A DEFECT? - Our defects, our shortcomings are no more nor less than our habits of thoughts and feelings, our belief systems, our rules/patterns, in other words our personal “reality” which no longer works or which is harmful or too limiting.

A DRY HORSE THIEF - Why go to so much trouble? There are people who have been around the program for years and have never done much of an inventory, if any. They have never taken the time to get to the conditions and causes. They may be “dry” but their habits of thoughts and feelings, their personal “reality” has not changed. It is very unlikely that these people will be joyous, happy and free. If nothing has changed, then nothing has changed. There is an old saying, “If you sober up a drunken horse thief, you’ve got a sober horse thief.”

FACT-FINDING FACT-FACING PROCESS - “Though our decision [Step Three] was a vital and crucial step, it could have little permanent effect unless at once followed by a strenuous effort to face, and to be rid of, the things in ourselves which had been blocking us. Our liquor was but a symptom. *So we had to get down to causes and conditions*... A business, which takes no regular inventory, usually goes broke. Taking a commercial inventory is a fact-finding and a fact-facing process. It is an effort to discover the truth about the stock-in-trade. One object is to disclose damaged or un-salable goods, to get rid of them promptly and without regret. If the owner of the business is to be successful, he cannot fool himself about values.” Nor can we. (Page 64 Alcoholics Anonymous)

EARNING OR GRACE - Some of us have an old belief that if we really work at this program we will earn a place in a “secret order.” We were grossly misled. We *cannot* earn the Three Spiritual Gifts; these were given to us when each of us was created. However, we do have a part, and that is to be as open and receptive as we can be for this grace. This would include uncovering, owning, and having a willingness to let go of everything that is not part of these Three Spiritual Gifts. Our personal “reality” runs on automatic, twenty-four hours a day, so we need to be committed to this process - otherwise we will continue to be a victim of our own habits of thoughts and feelings.

WHAT ARE THESE PRINCIPLES? The idea that the principles are embodied in the simple words that somehow got assigned to each Step over the years is another case of over-simplifying. I believe that they do have a lot of meaning; in fact they are included in this workbook at the heading of each Step. As we begin to work Each Step, we begin to understand the principles, which are embodied in the process. That is, each one of the Steps is part of the whole and is not intended to be a stand-alone. It is clear that alone none of the Steps would be as effective.

