

Week 1

Faith is more than our greatest gift; its sharing with others is our greatest responsibility.

Grapevine, April 1961

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True community happens in the process of drawing each other into the light of true being. In this process we share a deepening experience of the joy of life, the joy of being, as we discover more and more of its fullness in a loving faith shared with others.

Community of Love,

John Main OSB

Week 2

. . . when we are willing to place spiritual growth first—then and only then do we have a real chance to grow in healthy awareness and mature love.

As Bill Sees It: The AA Way of Life

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Meditation is the way of growth, the way of deepening our own commitment to life, our own maturity This contact with the Life Source is vital for us, because without it we can hardly begin to suspect the potential that our life has for us . . . that we should come to fullness of life, fullness of love, fullness of wisdom.

From Anxiety to Peace, John Main

Week 3

We have been granted a gift which amounts to a new state of consciousness and being. Readiness to receive the gift lies in the practice of the Twelve Steps.

Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions

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Accepting the gift is what we do when we meditate. Meditation is concerned with being rather than doing. As we learn to be, how to accept the gift of our being, we find real contentment.

Light Within: Meditation as Pure Prayer,

Laurence Freeman OSB

Week 4

We know that a spiritual experience is the key to survival and that for most of us it is the only key. We must awake or we die. So, we do awake . . . Then what? . . . a new life of endless possibilities can be lived if we are willing to continue our awakening.

Grapevine, 1957

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Meditation is in essence a way of learning to become awake, fully alive and yet still. It is the stillness of meditation that leads you forward to that state of wakefulness and the sense of being completely alive that dawns in you because you are in harmony with yourself and, gradually, in harmony with the whole of creation.

Moment of Christ, John Main

Week 5

The greatest gift that can come to anybody is a spiritual awakening
So, then, what is this 'spiritual awakening,' this 'transforming experience'?
How can we receive it and what does it do?

Grapevine, December 1957

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The greatest gift that we have been given usually misses our attention. We usually fail to see it. It is not health, wealth, beauty or talent. The greatest gift is our being, simply the fact that we are. This is the first and fundamental gift. . . . Accepting that gift is the first step, the essential step to becoming fully alive and therefore fully content.

Light Within, Laurence Freeman

Week 6

For weeks I sat in the back of the rooms. . . . There was laughter in those rooms and sometimes tears, but always love, and when I was able to let it in, that love helped me heal.

Alcoholics Anonymous - Big Book

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Meditation begins with a call that awakens us out of the coma of self-preoccupation. We are called, we are chosen. Meditation is our response to that call from the deepest center of our awakened consciousness . . . by letting go in meditation we learn how to love.

Our Hearts Burned Within Us: Reading the New Testament with John Main,
Gregory Ryan (ed.)

Week 7

This seems to be the primary healing circuit: an outgoing love of God's creation and His people, by means of which we avail ourselves of His love for us.

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier, AA Grapevine

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Meditation is simply uncovering the love that is God in our own hearts. The experience of prayer is the experience of coming into full union with the energy that created the universe . . . and that energy is love.

The Way of Unknowing: Expanding Spiritual Horizons through Meditation, John Main

Week 8

I try hard to hold fast to the truth that a full and thankful heart cannot entertain great conceits. When brimming with gratitude, one's heartbeat must surely result in outgoing love, the finest emotion that we can ever know.

Grapevine, March 1962

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We know ourselves loved and so we love. Meditation is concerned with completing this cycle of love. By our opening to the Spirit who dwells in our hearts, and who in silence is loving to all, we begin the journey of faith. We end in faith because there is always a new beginning to the eternal dance of being-in-love.

Word into Silence, John Main

Week 9

We of this world are pupils in a great school of life. It is intended that we try to grow, and that we try to help our fellow travelers to grow in the kind of love that makes no demands. In short, we try to move toward the image and likeness of God as we understand Him.

Bill Wilson, letter, 1950

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Once we begin the journey, we receive so many strengths. The greatest strength is that the journey attracts fellow travelers. One who begins alone will be joined by others . . . rekindled in many quiet corners of the earth.

The Present Christ, John Main

Week 10

As a child, hearing my first symphony I was lifted up into its indescribable harmony. . . So today, when I listen for God's music of the spheres, I can now and again hear those divine chords by which I am told that the great composer loves me—and that I love him.

Grapevine, June 1961

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Some time ago, I was at a concert. As we waited for the concert to begin, I listened to the orchestra beginning to tune up. It was about the most discordant sound I've ever heard. Each instrument was playing its own way, in total disharmony. Then what happened was that the oboe, a quiet, little instrument, began to play and all the other instruments tuned in on its note. And gradually, the entire disharmony began to calm down. Then there was silence and the concert began. It seems to me that the mantra is very much like that little oboe. In meditation the mantra brings all the parts of our being, one by one, bit by bit, into harmony. And when we are in harmony, we *are* the music of God.

Food for the Journey: Weekly Teachings for the Meditation Group,
Kim Nataraja

Week 11

So, it is necessary for all of us to accept whatever positive gifts we receive with a deep humility, always bearing in mind that our negative attitudes were first necessary as a means of reducing us to such a state that we would be ready for a gift of the positive ones via the conversion experience . . . the immense deflation that finally resulted is indeed the foundation upon which your spiritual experience rests.

As Bill Sees It, letter, 1964,

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Meditation seems to me to be in that sense a grace. Something that is a gift, something that is genuinely free, it doesn't cost anything and there is no bargaining about meditation. To find meditation in one's life is a grace. It's something unexpected, and finding in an unexpected moment, in an unexpected way, something that changes the world for you.

Grace at Work: the Healing Power of Meditation, Laurence Freeman

Week 12

Step Two is the rallying point for all of us. Whether agnostic, atheist, or former believer, we can stand together on this step. True humility and an open mind can lead us to faith,

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

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Meditation is about finding God within ourselves. . . . In the Christian contemplative tradition in particular, it says *to know your self is to know God*. Self-knowledge leads to knowledge of God. It doesn't matter what you believe in that sense, when you begin to meditate. You only have to be open to yourself, and then find the God who is in indissoluble union with you, because this love of God cannot reject us.

Grace at Work, Laurence Freeman

Week 13

. . . trust in God can keep me calm when all around me are agitated. Calmness is trust in action. I should seek all things that can help me to cultivate calmness. To attain material things, the world learns to attain speed. To attain spiritual things, I have to learn to attain a state of calm.

Twenty-Four Hours a Day: Meditations

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It often seems as if we rush through life at such high speed while in our heart there is the essential interior flame of being. Our rushing often brings it to the point of extinction. But when we sit down to meditate, in stillness and simplicity, the flame begins to burn brightly and steadily. As we abandon thinking in terms of success and self-importance, the light of the flame helps us to understand ourselves and others in terms of light, warmth and love.

Word Made Flesh: Recovering a Sense of the Sacred through Prayer,
John Main

Week 14

Every day is a day when we must carry the vision of God's will into all of our activities. 'How can I best serve Thee? —Thy will, not mine, be done.' These are thoughts which must go with us constantly. We can exercise our will power along this line all we wish. It is the proper use of the will.

Alcoholics Anonymous - Big Book

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When the rhythm of the twice-daily meditation becomes part of the fabric of our being, entirely natural and so always renewed and renewing, then our life is being transformed from the center outwards. Then we are learning to see even the appearances of our ordinary life, work, relationships, with the vision of love.

The Present Christ, John Main

WEEK 15

Courtesy, kindness, justice, and love are the keynotes by which we may come into harmony with practically anybody. When in doubt we can always pause, saying, 'Not my will, but Thine, be done.' And we can often ask ourselves, 'Am I doing to others as I would have them do to me—today?'

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

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Our family life, our relationships, our work, our recreation - everything in our life - is brought into harmony, because in the process of meditation everything in our life is aligned on the center The practice of meditation is simply the way to be open to this presence, to this energy, to this harmony, and to be open to it ever more profoundly.

In The Beginning, John Main

WEEK 16

From the beginning, communication in AA has been no ordinary transmission of helpful ideas and attitudes. Because of our kinship in suffering, and because our common means of deliverance are effective for ourselves only when constantly carried to others, our channels of contact have always been charged with the language of the heart.

AA Today

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I think what all of us have to learn is not so much that we have to create silence. The silence is there within us. What we have to do is to enter into

it, to become silent, to become the silence. The purpose of meditation and the challenge of meditation is to allow ourselves to become silent enough to allow this interior silence to emerge. Silence is the language of the spirit.

Word into Silence, John Main

WEEK 17

We finally saw that faith in some kind of God was a part of our make-up, just as much as the feeling we have for a friend. Sometimes we had to search fearlessly, but He was there. He was as much a fact as we were. We found the Great Reality deep down within us. In the last analysis it is only there that He may be found. It was so with us.

Alcoholics Anonymous - Big Book

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Meditation, because of its highly practical orientation, leads us day in and day out to cultivate the life of the spirit, to return to that rootedness in our center. Learning to sit well, still and upright is very helpful to this rooting in reality. It is the first step away from self-concern into a whole frame of mind and of being in which we are both lost and find ourselves in that greater reality of which we are part.

The Way of Unknowing, John Main

WEEK 18

Try to see the life of the spirit as a calm place, shut away from the turmoil of the world. Think of your spiritual home as a place full of peace, serenity, and contentment. Go to this quiet, meditative place for the strength to

carry you through today's duties and problems. Keep coming back here for refreshment when you are weary of the hubbub of the outside world. From this quietness and communion comes our strength.

Twenty-Four Hours a Day: Meditations

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In our society we are so used to striving for things, to owning things, to earning the approval of others, that it is very hard for us to think of ourselves as usefully employed if we are just 'resting in the Lord' in this state of being in quiet. But those of us who try to tread this pilgrimage need always to remember that just being in God's presence is all-sufficient. It is a form of pure action.

Fully Alive: The Daily Path of Christian Meditation, John Main

WEEK 19

Looking back through the years, we shall be unable to conceive more than a mere fraction of what God has wrought among us Who will really understand the inner nature of our transforming spiritual experiences, those gifts of God that opened to us a new world of being and doing and living? Indeed, our blessings have been quite beyond any human comprehension.

The Language of the Heart: Bill W's Grapevine Writings, July 1965

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Meditation is a way of coming to your own center, coming to the foundation of your own being, and remaining there - still, silent, attentive. Meditation is in essence a way of learning to become awake, to be fully alive and be still. The way to that wakefulness is silence and stillness.

Word into Silence, John Main

WEEK 20

Bill came to see that facing his dependency issues meant becoming free from depression . . . 'I realize that the basic defect of my life had been a craving to depend absolutely upon the instinctual rewards of a place in society, material and emotional security - also, the right romance. Consciously and unconsciously, I had always demanded these things as a condition of happiness. The only absolute that we can depend on is God's love.'

The Soul of Sponsorship the Friendship of Father Ed Dowling, SJ and Bill Wilson in Letters, Robert Fitzgerald

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In a deep, creative silence, we meet God in a way which transcends all our powers of intellect and language. We have to listen, to concentrate, to attend rather than to think. Silence is really absolutely necessary for the human spirit if it really is to thrive, and not only just to thrive, but to be creative, to have a creative response to life, to our environment, to friends. Because the silence gives our spirit room to breathe, room to be.

Word into Silence, John Main

WEEK 21

Now and then we may be granted a glimpse of that ultimate reality which is God's kingdom . . . we will be comforted and assured that our own destiny in that realm will be secure for so long as we try, however falteringly, to find and do the will of our own Creator.

Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions

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Meditation is a powerful discipline for integration and transformation. By turning inwards in silence and solitude we re-tune the whole of our fragmented being and, moreover, become aware of our link to Ultimate Reality.

Dancing With your Shadow, Kim Nataraja

Week 22

Whenever I find myself under acute tensions, I lengthen my daily walks and slowly repeat our Serenity Prayer in rhythm to my steps and breathing. . . . I try to repeat, 'God grant me the serenity to love their best, and never fear their worst.' This benign healing process of repetition, sometimes necessary to persist with for days, has seldom failed to restore me to at least a workable emotional balance and perspective.

Grapevine, March 1962

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Ultimately, all contemplative prayer is about love and the full realization of love. The contemplative prayer of Christian meditation is a path to this awakened state.

The Spiritual Journey, Sister Eileen O'Hea

Week 23

Set for yourself the task of growing daily more and more into the consciousness of a Higher Power. We must keep trying to improve our conscious contact with God. This is done by prayer, quiet times, and communion I pray that I may be still and know that God is with me. I pray that I may open my mind to the leading of the Divine Mind.

Twenty-Four Hours a Day: Meditations

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Meditation is an entrance into the nearness of God who is to be found in our hearts. It is also an entrance into God's infinite space. As each of us must discover for ourselves, it is entry into this vast, silent space that is the real power of meditation. From that silence God answers our questions; God answers the yearnings of our heart with the simple answer of love. His love is our hope, our unshakeable confidence, that whatever the difficulty, whatever may be the challenge we face, we can meet it out of the infinite resources he gives us. God does all this within us in silence, if only we will allow the mystery to encompass us.

Fully Alive: An Introduction to Christian Meditation, John Main

Week 24

We have to find a life in the world of Grace and Spirit, and this is certainly a new dimension for most of us. Surprisingly, our quest for this realm of being is not too difficult. Our conscious entry into it usually begins as soon as we have deeply confessed our personal powerlessness to go on alone, and have made our appeal to whatever God we think there is – or may be. The gift of faith and the consciousness of a higher power is the outcome.

Grapevine, January 1962

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To open to a higher power and to open to community, we have to open to others. You call it 'fellowship'; in the meditation world I would call it 'community'. Meditation seems to me to be in that sense a grace. . . . It's something unexpected, and finding in an unexpected moment, in an unexpected way, something that changes the world for you.

Grace at Work, Laurence Freeman

Week 25

Many of us keep ourselves year after year in the rather easy spiritual kindergarten . . . almost inevitably we become dissatisfied; . . . our bright-eyed friends tell us how well we are doing. But inside, we know better. We know we aren't doing well enough. We still can't handle life, as life is. There must be a serious flaw somewhere in our spiritual practice and development. What, then, is it? The chances are better than even that we shall locate our trouble in our misunderstanding or neglect of Step Eleven – prayer, meditation, and the guidance of God.

Take Step Eleven, Bill W, June 1958

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When we are beginning to meditate, we must be very clear in our minds that we understand it as a discipline. There is no liberty unless we undertake the discipline, and beginning to meditate is a commitment to that discipline. Meditation is nothing whatever to do with some magical technique. It involves the fullest human response from each one of us, a response to a daily discipline, to a lifetime discipline that leads us to this absolute liberty of spirit.

The Door to Silence, John Main

Week 26

The practice of the Twelve Steps brought incredible releases from fear of every description, despite the wide prevalence of formidable personal problems. When fear did persist, we knew it for what it was, and under God's grace we became able to handle it. We began to see each adversity as a God-given opportunity to develop the kind of courage which is born of humility, rather than of bravado. Thus, we were enabled to accept ourselves, our circumstances, and our fellows.

Grapevine, Bill W, 1962

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How does meditation help? It's clearly part of the program - the Eleventh Step, 'prayer and meditation'. It's the step before the last step which leads to altruism, towards giving yourself to others. In other words, it's the step before *you* become the channels of grace to others in need. Because you have received grace, because you've been healed through grace, not through punishment (self-punishment or otherwise), you then become the channels of grace to others in need.

Grace at Work, Laurence Freeman

Week 27

By persistent prayer, persistent, firm, and simple trust, you achieve the treasures of the spirit. By persistent practice, you can eventually obtain joy, peace, assurance, security, health, happiness, and serenity.

*Twenty-Four Hours a Day:
Meditations*

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Meditation is a way that brings every part of our day, all our experience and all the dimensions of our being, into harmony. It is the way beyond the personal dividedness and anxiety from which we suffer as a result of our denial of God and our separation from the Spirit. Meditation proves itself, through faithful practice, as a way to deep peace and joy. It takes us across the bridge of sadness that arises from the feeling of separation. The ego arises in separateness and when the ego is transcended we realize our unity with God.

Word Made Flesh, John Main

Week 28

The Twelve Steps are not sustained by any human authority. Yet we powerfully unite around them because the truth they contain has saved our lives, has opened the door to a new world. Our experience tells us these universal truths work. Ultimately, these truths govern our lives . . . we are ruled, not by people, but by principles, by truths and, as most of us would say, by God.

*The Language of the Heart: Bill W's
Grapevine Writings*

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What do I mean by contemplation? And why does meditation lead us into this state of contemplation? Well, Thomas Aquinas defined contemplation very simply as 'the simple enjoyment of the truth.' The simple enjoyment of the truth. You couldn't get anything more simple than that. It is simply finding joy in what is. So, contemplation, then, is simple. It embraces, includes and embodies everything that is. All dimensions of reality. All points of view. All the sources of wisdom. All cultures. All faiths. God is One.

Sources of Wisdom, Laurence Freeman

Week 29

Prayer is the force behind the work. Prayer is based on faith that God is working with us and through us. We can believe that nothing is impossible in human relationships, if we depend on the help of God.

*Twenty-Four Hours a Day:
Meditations*

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The more you meditate, the more you realize that meditation is not an inactive path. It is not outside the sphere of action, rather it is at the center of action. Meditation I think we could describe as 'pure action'. It is the highest form of human action and because it is pure action it takes us into the realm of 'pure being'.

Being On the Way, John Main

Week 30

I believe that God's presence brings peace and that peace, like a quiet-flowing river, will cleanse all irritants away. In these quiet times, God will teach me how to rest my nerves. I will not be afraid. I will learn how to relax. When I am relaxed, God's strength will flow into me. I will be at peace.

Twenty-Four Hours a Day: Meditations

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Christian meditation is far more than thinking or feeling about God. It is being with Him, living not just in His presence but from the resources of His presence His power is the basic energy of all creation, the power of love. That power is a mighty river flowing in and through our hearts and in meditating what we do is to open our hearts to the pure reality of that stream of love.

Being on the Way, John Main

Week 31

. . . the principle of anonymity has an immense spiritual significance. It reminds us that we are to place principles before personalities; that we are actually to practice a genuine humility. This to the end that our great blessings may never spoil us; that we shall forever live in thankful contemplation of Him who presides over us all.

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

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The humility of meditation is to put aside all self-important questioning. To put aside self-importance means to experience ourselves poor, divested of ego, as we learn how to be. To be present to the Presence. We learn, not out of our own cleverness, but from the source of wisdom itself, the Spirit of God.

The Door to Silence, John Main

Week 32

I was to sit quietly when in doubt, asking only for direction and strength to meet my problems as He would have me. . . . Belief in the power of God, plus enough willingness, honesty and humility to establish and maintain the new order of things, were the essential requirements. Simple, but not easy. . . . It meant destruction of self-centeredness. I must turn in all things to the Father of Light who presides over us all.

Bill's Story, Alcoholics Anonymous

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. . . finding happiness by freeing ourselves from our ego. How do you do that in meditation? In a very simple way - we stop thinking about ourselves. I said simple, not easy. It isn't easy to stop thinking about ourselves, because we are so caught up in ourselves. But in meditation, we reverse that process. We try something different. We stop thinking about ourselves and we place our attention in God.

Relationship with Jesus, Laurence Freeman

Week 33

In meditation, debate has no place. We rest quietly with the thoughts or prayers of spiritually centered people who understand, so that we may experience and learn. This is the state of being that so often discovers and deepens a conscious contact with God.

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

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By sitting still and focusing on our mantra we allow ourselves to become aware of the silence that lives at the center of our being Sitting still in silence also forms the foundation for stability, standing on firm ground, spiritually and psychologically rooted. This is a rootedness that lasts not only the duration of your meditation sessions, but will become an attitude of *mind*. This will transform your life and allow you to live and act permanently from that deep center of silence at the core of your being, our meeting place with the Divine.

Food for the Journey: Weekly Teachings for the Meditation Group,
Kim Nataraja

Week 34

Gently breathe in God's spirit You can become a channel for God's spirit to flow through you and into the lives of others. The works that you can do will only be limited by your spiritual development. Let your spirit be in harmony with God's spirit I pray that I may become a channel for God's spirit. I pray that God's spirit may flow through me into the lives of others.

Twenty-Four Hours a Day: Meditations

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To tread this path you do not require any special characteristics or special talents except the ordinary talent of knowing that we must go beyond self-importance and self-centeredness. And it does not take much ingenuity to realize that. We must root ourselves not in self-love but in universal love. We become persons, not for ourselves, but for others, for all, for the *All*.

Moment of Christ, John Main

Week 35

Practicing Step Three is like the opening of a door which to all appearances is still closed and locked. All we need is a key, and the decision to swing the door open. There is only one key . . . and it is called willingness. Once the door opens almost of itself . . . we shall see a pathway beside which is an inscription. It reads: 'This is the way to a faith that works.'

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

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The mantra is like the key unlocking the door to the heart to allow the pure light of love to flood in. Although powerful, it is gentle. In the practice itself you will find the powers of gentleness, forgiveness and compassion, all revealing themselves. Do not fear their power to change you.

The Heart of Creation, John Main

Week 36

We try to fill the emptiness inside us with something external, but the craving self is a bottomless pit for which addiction is the perfect metaphor

– ‘the equivalent, on a low level, of the spiritual thirst . . . for wholeness,’ as Carl Jung put it in his 1961 letter to Wilson.

The Spirituality of Imperfection: Storytelling and the Search for Meaning, Ernest Kurtz & Katherine Ketcham

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The experience of meditation is the experience of integration and wholeness. In the Christian tradition it’s called the ‘prayer of the heart’ It’s in the heart-consciousness that physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions of ourselves find unity, find harmony, and integration.

Grace at Work, Laurence Freeman

Week 37

Moments of perception can build into a lifetime of spiritual serenity Roots of reality, supplanting the neurotic underbrush, will hold fast despite the high winds of the forces which would destroy us, or which we would use to destroy ourselves.

The Language of the Heart, Bill W,
letter, 1949

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To be stable we need to be sure of ourselves. We need to be sure - confident, that we would not be blown away by the first storm winds that come up. Meditation is a way to this stability Saying the mantra is like dropping the anchor, . . . real stability for each of us can only come when we are firmly anchored in God. The extraordinary discovery for us to

make is that once we are anchored in our true selves, we are anchored in God.

Hunger for Depth and Meaning,

John Main

Week 38

When the thought was expressed that there might be a God personal to me, I didn't like the idea. So my friend Ebby made what then seemed a novel suggestion. He said, 'Why don't you choose your own conception of God?' That statement hit me hard. It melted the icy intellectual mountain in whose shadow I had lived and shivered many years. I stood in the sunlight at last.

As Bill Sees It

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Meditation is the spiritual path that brings us to the fully personal experience of the oneness of reality, to the one God. It brings us into a unifying personal experience of that Truth, not into any second-hand report about it. We are not experiencing what we have read. We are not experiencing what somebody else has described to us.

Light Within: Meditation as Pure Prayer, Laurence Freeman

Week 39

Why, for instance, at this particular point in history, has God chosen to communicate his healing grace to so many of us? Who can say what this communication actually is – so mysterious and yet so practical? We can only partly realize what we have received and what it has meant to each of us. It occurs to me that every aspect of this global unfoldment can be related to a

single crucial word. The word is communication. There has been a lifesaving communication among ourselves, with the world around us, and with God.

The Language of the Heart,
Grapevine, 1960

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Our prayer of Christian meditation brings us into the experience of holy mystery. It is an experience of penetrating at ever deeper levels the depth of my own being and the being of God and knowing that they are one.

The Spiritual Journey, Sister Eileen O'Hea

Week 40

We shall have to try for all the freedom from fear that is possible for us to attain. Then we shall need to find both the courage and the grace to deal constructively with whatever fears remain. Trying to understand our fears, and the fears of others, is but a first step. The larger question is how, and where, we go from there.

Grapevine, 1962

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We were meant from all eternity to know our goodness, loveliness and truth; to know that we are in a mutual relationship of love with the God who delights in us and that this delight is not dependent on anything. We do not have to earn this love or to achieve it. It is just there, always there. It is not dependent on our moods either, or our personalities or accomplishments. Nothing can separate us from this love.

Rain for the Sea, Sister Eileen O'Hea

Week 41

Ever deepening humility, accompanied by an ever-greater willingness to accept and to act upon clear-cut obligations - these are truly our touchstones for all growth in the life of the Spirit. They hold up to us the very essence of right being and right doing. It is by them that we are enabled to find and to do God's will

Grapevine, Bill W, 1964

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The time-bound structures of language and the ego-bound drives of desire and imagination perpetually fail to find the entrance to this mystery. The mantra, taking us into the present moment and beyond the ego, slips through the narrow gate into the city of God. Only silence makes ultimate sense. Doing and thinking, which can become such compulsive modes of operation, do not make me who I am. It is *being* that makes me. What makes us who we are is God being God.

Word Made Flesh: John Main

Week 42

In thinking about our day we may face indecision. We may not be able to determine which course to take. Here we ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought or a decision. We relax and take it easy. We don't struggle. We are often surprised how the right answers come after we have tried this for a while.

Alcoholics Anonymous ('Into Action')

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Prayer is essentially a relationship with God. . . . In other words, various levels of union and communion become possible. We use vocal prayers or the prayers that the church offers us in the liturgy, because we don't know what else to say. We don't know where to begin. All we know is how to talk about the weather, and presumably God is not that interested in the weather, at least not as much as we are. But God is interested in us. What God listens to is not our words but our hearts.

Divine Therapy and Addiction, Thomas Keating

Week 43

Abandon yourself to God as you understand God. Admit your faults to Him and to your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny.

Alcoholics Anonymous - Big Book

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. . . God is at home in us He is not sometimes there, but always there. So, we can be at home in God, we can find the place to belong, we can find the place where we are loved. We can find the place that enables us to grow in love and to love others, to come into harmony, unity and peace with others. We can find the place where we are secure, where we are always held, where our needs will be met, to which we can constantly return to be refreshed, then move out to meet the challenges and adventures of daily life.

Images of Meditation, Liz Watson

Week 44

With few exceptions our members find that they have tapped an unsuspected inner resource which they presently identify with their own conception of a Power greater than themselves. Most of us think this awareness of a Power greater than ourselves is the essence of spiritual experience. Our more religious members call it 'God-consciousness.'

Alcoholics Anonymous, Appendix II, Spiritual Experience

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The truly spiritual man or woman learns to live in harmony with themselves, and to live in harmony with the whole of creation. What we can say is: To be in one's own centre is to be in God. In the words of Jesus, 'The kingdom of God is within you.' (Luke 17:21) We must remember that this kingdom is not a place, but an experience. The experience is the experience of the reality of the power of God. In the Christian vision, it is knowing that that power is the power of love.

The Hunger for Depth and Meaning, John Main

Week 45

As the pain subsides, a healing tranquility takes its place. And when humility and serenity are so combined, something else of great moment is apt to occur . . . many in recovery, once agnostic or atheistic, tells us that it was during this stage of Step Five that they first actually felt the presence of God. And even those who had faith . . . often become conscious of God as never before.

Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions

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Meditation is learning to be sensitive to and aware of His presence within us. It is this Presence that teaches us that each of us is made a real person by the power of his love. If we can make contact with those depths within us we discover that we are not just autonomous, isolated persons. Each of us, in this mystery of Christ dwelling in our hearts, is called to love and to be loved beyond all division.

Fully Alive: The Daily Path of Christian Meditation, John Main

Week 46

By having quiet times each morning, we come to depend on God's help . . . our faith is strengthened by these quiet times of prayer. By listening to others. by working with others, times of quiet meditation, our faith in God gradually becomes strong.

Twenty-Four Hours a Day: Meditations

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Silence in prayer, as between two people, is a sign of trust and acceptance. Without the capacity to be silent, we are unable to listen to another person. In its essence, silence is nothing less than worship in spirit and truth.

Christian Meditation Your Daily Practice,
Laurence Freeman

Week 47

No one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. We are not saints. The point is that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection.

Alcoholics Anonymous

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. . . in paying attention to the mantra as we say it, however many times we fail and get distracted, we are nevertheless *doing the work* that has a cumulative effect. And it works in the simplest possible way, by cutting through the jungle, the undergrowth of our years of accumulated memories, plans, desires. . . . It is the simplest therapy of all. . . . But it's not easy, . . . Being on a spiritual path is not about being perfect; it's about believing in wholeness and accepting humbly the process, the stages of healing.

Grace at Work, Laurence Freeman

Week 48

We sit in meetings and listen, not only to receive something ourselves, but to give the reassurance and support which our presence can bring.

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

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Through our daily practice of meditation, we become more harmonious with our self, more one with our self . . . , we gradually discover that we are more connected with others, more harmonious with others, more in tune with others. We are learning to listen better to others, to hear their particular song, to get on their wavelength. We are learning to harmonize with them

Images of Meditation, Liz Watson

Week 49

As we felt new power flow in, as we enjoyed peace of mind, as we discovered we could face life successfully, as we became conscious of His

presence, we began to lose our fear of today, tomorrow or the hereafter. We were reborn.

Alcoholics Anonymous - Big Book

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Being born again happens as we realize the power of the living Spirit of God within us. . . . Every time we sit down to meditate we are changed. We are never quite the same afterwards. Every time we meditate we undergo that experience of transformation, shedding old-ness and being made new.

Light Within, Laurence Freeman

Week 50

It is not theological arguments that solve the problems of the questing soul, but the sincere cry of that soul to God for strength and the certainty of that soul that the cry will be heard and answered.

Twenty-Four Hours a Day: Meditations

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In meditation we learn to be still, to be calm, to be recollected and to become aware of the love of God's presence in our hearts. This awareness arises from his revelation, not our manipulation. What we have to do, though, is to be still. His presence is not just another theory, some speculative theology. It is a dynamic personal presence that is to be found in the heart of each one of us.

The Heart of Creation,

John Main

Week 51

Reinforced by what grace I could secure in prayer, I found I had to exert every ounce of will and action to cut off these faulty emotional dependencies upon people, upon AA, indeed, upon any set of circumstances whatsoever. Then only could I be free to love as Francis had. Emotional and instinctual satisfactions, I saw, were really the extra dividends of having love, offering love, and expressing a love appropriate to each relation of life.

Language of the Heart, letter, 1957

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Meditation is the work of coming out of the past, letting go of the future, and coming into the reality of the present moment, which we call the kingdom of God, for in the present moment we find the presence of God within us. At this stage the mind is like driving in a fast stream of traffic or being stuck in a traffic jam. Meditation slows the traffic and clears it. But we can't do this entirely on our own. St Paul tells us that the Spirit prays within us, deeper than words.

The Heart of Creation, John Main

Week 52

How truth makes us free is something that we can well understand It continues to release us from conflicts and miseries beyond reckoning; it banishes fear and isolation. The unity of our Fellowship, the love we cherish for each other, the esteem in which the world holds us – all of these are products of such integrity as, under God, we have been privileged to receive.

The Best of Bill, August 1961

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The essence of life is therefore to learn the truths of our existence and in doing so grow and work our way back to God, to come home In moving towards this denser level of reality and consciousness we forgot who we truly were. As is stated in the Gospel of Thomas, we are all drunk; we are blind in our hearts. After time, once we allow our guardian angel, our self, to remind us of our essential nature, we are able to make the journey home by focusing on the spark of our original consciousness. The return to union is therefore a free choice available to everyone.

Dancing with Our Shadow, Kim Nataraja