

Big Book Comes Alive Study Group

Joe & Charlie Audio Workshop

WEEK #23

Step 11

(Session 37 - 10:27.0)

J & C OK. The next paragraph tells us what to do in the morning when we get up.

Big Book, p. 86, par. 2 *"On awakening let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead. We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin, we ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives. Under these conditions we can employ our mental faculties with assurance, for after all God gave us brains to use. Our thought-life will be placed on a much higher plane when our thinking is cleared of wrong motives. "*

J & C Most of us get up in the morning and the first thing we do is go to the bathroom. One guy told that the first thing he did was get on a treadmill. I said "Man you've got a better bladder than I've got. I go to the bathroom first". Then we head for the kitchen. And we get a cup of coffee and maybe a little food, and we feed the body. We get the body taken care of and we go back to the bathroom again. And you ladies fix your hair and we men fix our beards or faces or whatever. When we get that part of use done we go to the closet. And we begin to pick out the clothes that's going to cover the body during the day. You make sure they match now.

You've got to make sure they match, they're the right color. We send lots of time on our clothes. After we get the body all taken care of, we feed the cat or the dog. We start out the door. We lock the door behind us. We don't want anybody to steal our junk. We go out to the car and we check the air in the tires and we check the fuel in the fuel tank. We turn the switch, start the motor and we take off down the road.

But what did we do about our minds that morning? We took care of all the material things including our body. What did we do about our minds? Our minds are going to run the whole show all day. Did we check the air there? Did we check the fuel level there? Did we feed the mind a little bit? If we would take 5 to 10 minutes in the morning to ask God to direct our thinking throughout the day. Ask God to give us the right thought and action. Before we even start thinking about today, then chances are our thoughts about today are going to be in better shape. If we spent 5 minutes in the morning there coupled with 5 minutes in the evening when we go to bed, there's no telling what we could do with our minds. If we spent as much time on our minds as we do on our bodies, my God we could become anything, couldn't we? If you've spent 5 in the morning and 5 in the evening you've still got 23 hours and 50 minutes to screw the thing up. It only takes a little bit of time. Very definite valuable suggestion.

Big Book, p. 86, par. 3 *"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. "*

J & C This is a form of meditation for busy people. We alcoholics don't have time to lay down on the floor and listen to soft music. We don't have time for chanting and all that stuff. We're busy people. The book says when you face indecision, you can't decide what to do, recognize you don't have the answer, turn to God and ask God for the right thought or decision. Don't struggle, relax and take it easy. I think what it means is get your mind off on something else. And the way I get my mind off on something else is I go start mowing the grass, painting the house or washing the dishes. And quite often my mind goes back to that subject and I've got information I didn't have before. It says, "Why don't you call Bill. Maybe he'll know." And I call Bill and Bill's got the answer. I used to say "My wasn't it lucky I called Bill." No, this is a form of tapping into the sixth sense of direction. And if you practice at it, practice at it, practice at it, it gets to where it becomes a common thing to do. It's amazing how this stuff works. Very simple suggestions.

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Big Book, p. 87, par. 1 *"We usually conclude the period of meditation with a prayer that we be shown all through the day what our next step is to be, that we be given whatever we need to take care of such problems. We ask especially for freedom from self-will, and are careful to make no request for ourselves only. We may ask for ourselves, however, if others will be helped. We are careful never to pray for our own selfish ends. Many of us have wasted a lot of time doing that and it doesn't work. You can easily see why. "*

J & C As I said, I use to use God like an errand boy. Send him out to get this done and that done. It didn't work. He never did come back with nothing. But I learned through doing that, to start praying only for the knowledge of his will for me and the power to carry that out. And today I can't think of anything that would be better than to have God's will done in my life, only. It would be a whole better than anything that I could even dream of. Because as I said here today I am in places today and many, many areas of my life that you can't get to other than by God's grace. It can not be done. You know I was practicing this thing around and one day I was listening to the radio and I heard a song that I had heard all my life and it talks about having a plane of inspiration. I heard this song all my life. It's called "In the garden". Any of you all know that song? And it came to me, "well that's a song about prayer and meditation, isn't it?" In the morning while the dew is still on the roses. That's about prayer and meditation. And I didn't know that. It just came to me. I can read these things and I can see these things today and I know what they mean. And I really do know what they mean. I don't know where that came from either. Certainly it wasn't anything from me. I think it's God working in my life. I believe that.

They said to me "Pray only for knowledge of his will and the power to carry that out" I said "How in the hell is he going to know what I want?" And they said "He don't care what you want." They said "He's interested in what you need" And he knows more about what you need than you know yourself. And that's turned out to be exactly true. If I had written a list of things that I thought I needed when I first came to AA. If I'd have said "God give me these things and I will be satisfied for the rest of my life." I would have cheated myself. God has given me things far, far, far beyond my dreams could possible be before I came to AA. Absolutely amazing the things that take place in our lives by simply, simply trying to follow God's will. People who have been self-willed like us, who have literally destroyed ourselves on self-will, we don't need to be telling God what we want. God knows what we need. And if we do his will he's going to see that we get it. Now who could ever dream years and years ago we could be sitting in this room today, doing what we're doing.

A week ago we were in Reykjavik, Iceland. The place I'd wanted to visit all my life. And by golly I got to tour Iceland. Hell I'm 69 years old now before I got to do it, but I finally got to do it. I couldn't have done that if I'd been drinking. A year or two ago I go to go through the Chunnel under the English Channel. I read something in a magazine when I was a kid about 9 years old. It said, "Sooner or later the English and the French would build that thing." I said then, "If they ever build it, I'm going to go through it" Finally, finally I got to go through the Chunnel and rode that damn Chunnel train doing 200 miles an hour. Sixty years I dreamed that dream. Finally got to do it. Oh yah. God knows what we need. He's not interested in what we want.

Big Book, p. 87, par. 2 *"If circumstances warrant, we ask our wives or friends to join us in morning meditation. "*

J & C About 15 years ago, we were sitting in my living room, my wife over there in her chair and me in mine. And I'm reading my prayer and meditation stuff and she's reading her prayer and meditation

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stuff. She looked over and “Joe, would you”. No she said “Honey?” That’s what she said. I’m not ready for that this morning. “No you old silly thing. I want you to read this thing for me and tell me what it says.”

I said, “Well I can do that.” So I read that for her and I told her what it said and I told her a lot more than she wanted to know about it. And the next morning she said “Would you read this and tell me what this says” and I did and we discussed that little bit and that kind of set up a little deal in our house, praying together and sharing together. We hadn’t done that before. And I’ve heard all my life those people that pray together stay together.

Joe, how long has it been since you and Phyllis have had a divorce? 21 years. And I don’t ever thought about that. She come up with that.

Big Book, p. 87, par. 3 *"As we go through the day we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action. We constantly remind ourselves we are no longer running the show, humbly saying to ourselves many times each day "Thy will be done." We are then in much less danger of excitement, fear, anger, worry, self-pity, or foolish decisions. We become much more efficient. We do not tire so easily, for we are not burning up energy foolishly as we did when we were trying to arrange life to suit ourselves.*

It works - it really does. "

J & C That’s a full paragraph right there.

Big Book, p. 88, par. 2 *"We alcoholics are undisciplined. So we let God discipline us in the simple way we have just outlined. "*

J & C If you’ll follow these definite and valuable suggestions on page 86, 87 you will develop your own life of prayer and meditation. You’ll make your conscious contact. You’ll be able to tap in to that sixth sense of direction and it’s amazing the things that we can learn by doing that.
