

Focus for Day 15, February 13: I AM REVERENT

"I can do no other than be reverent before everything that is called life. I can do no other than to have compassion for all that is called life. That is the beginning and the foundation of all ethics." Albert Schweitzer, M.D.

Developing a reverent attitude towards life means taking time to be awed by beauty. I cultivate this awe by sitting in quiet contemplation to enjoy a spacious stillness.

I am invited in Psalm 46:10 to *"Pause awhile, be still and know that I am God."* From this well of silence, I feel connected to all of life. I am inspired to treat everyone and creation in a sacred manner. I revere life's mysteries.

Reflection Questions:

- ❖ What encourages me to pause and to be awed by beauty?
- ❖ What do I revere as sacred?
- ❖ How do I treat myself, others and creation with greater respect and reverence?

Action Step:

I take time today to revere all forms of life. I especially enjoy being awed by the wonder of: _____

Focus for Day 16 , February 14: I AM GRATEFUL

“In daily life we must see that it is not happiness that makes us grateful, but gratefulness that makes us happy.”

Brother David Steindl-Rast,
Coordinator of www.gratefulness.org

New research proves the old proverb, “A merry heart does good like a medicine.” Increasing Vitamin “G” or gratitude, can actually improve my health.

The challenge is to practice gratefulness in the midst of challenging times. The poet Rilke asks, “From what experience have you suffered most? Even what tastes most bitter, can be transformed into sweetness.”

The willingness to practice gratitude in the midst of crushing sorrows can release qualities of courage and compassion that are formed under duress.

Reflection Questions:

- ❖ What reminds me to develop a grateful heart and stop taking my resources for granted?
- ❖ How can gratitude transform what has tasted most bitter into a sweetness?
- ❖ What strengthens my ability to be thankful even in the midst of challenging circumstances?

Action Step:

I increase my daily level of Vitamin “G” by being grateful for my life and resources, particularly for: _____

Focus for Day 17 , February 15: I LIVE WITH INTEGRITY

"Always do right—this will gratify some and astonish the rest."
Mark Twain

Although it is tempting to tell a "white lie", I pay a high price when I do not live with integrity.

My body tenses up, fearing I will be caught. I lose the trust of those around me when I do not quickly own up to my mistakes. My spirit shrivels when I do not walk my talk.

The process of how I reach the goals is just as important as the result I am seeking. Justifying an inappropriate means diminishes the noble intention I began with.

Reflection Questions:

- ❖ Where does my life feel out of integrity?
- ❖ In what ways have I rationalized that the "ends justify the means"?
- ❖ What actions are needed to restore my integrity?

Action Step:

I listen to the nudging of my conscience. I will act today to restore my integrity by:

Focus for Day 18, February 16: I ENJOY FREEDOM

“Freedom is not worth having if it does not include the freedom to make mistakes.”
Mahatma Gandhi

Janis Joplin sang the phrase:
“Freedom is just another word for having nothing left to lose.”

I enjoy greater freedom when I release my attachments to any agendas. I surrender needing specific outcomes to feel happy.

I let go of any shame or doubt and learn from my mistakes. No matter what happens, I can enjoy an inner freedom.

Reflection Questions:

- ❖ What am I hanging on to that limits my freedom?
- ❖ What will it take to release my fear of making mistakes so that I can live with greater freedom?
- ❖ When do I feel most free and how will I expand that experience?

Action Step:

I give myself permission and the freedom to try something new, such as:

Focus for Day 19, February 17: I ACCEPT

“Who would you be with out your story? . . . Love what is.”
Byron
Katie, Founder of “The Work”

I feel challenged to accept what is, let alone to *love* it. Byron Katie invites me transform my story by turning around my judgments.

I accept the mirrors in my life who reflect back my judgments towards them. By journaling answers to Katie’s provocative questions below, I accept that when *“I spot it, I got it.”*

1. How do I react when I believe those negative thoughts and feelings?
2. Who would I be without that thought or feeling?
3. Am I willing to turn everything around that I just wrote—as if it were written about me?

Reflection Questions:

- ❖ To what degree am I willing to love and accept “what is”?
- ❖ What encourages me to accept the mirrors in my life who reflect back my judgments about them?
- ❖ How would my life be different if I truly accepted that whatever annoys me can be turned around to become a valuable teacher?

Action Step:

I accept and work with what is, specifically: _____

Focus for Day 20 , February 18: I FORGIVE MYSELF

"Forgiveness makes room for miracles to happen. The secret ingredient is the willingness to forgive, even when you don't feel like it."

Colin Tipping, Author of *Radical Forgiveness*

Forgiveness often happens in layers, like peeling an onion. At first, I cry. I make amends as best I can. Then, I forgive myself as much as I am able.

Later, if I am re-triggered by that painful memory, I know that I have more layers of pain and shame to release.

I am not truly free until I have forgiven myself completely. That last little bit is my invitation to accept a deeper level of inner healing and forgiveness.

Reflection Questions:

- ❖ What would it take to be *willing to begin* the process of self-forgiveness?
- ❖ What helps me to heal and release self-blame and judgment of past mistakes and to move forward with my life?
- ❖ What step will I take today to accept my imperfections and forgive myself at a deeper level?

Action Step:

I forgive myself for: _____ . I journal about the hurt, speak it out loud and burn the paper as a sign of releasing old pain and shame.

Focus for Day 21 , February 19: I AM INSPIRED

"If I am only 11 and I can help, imagine what everyone else can do."

Natalie Achenbach, Student

Natalie heard about the plight of Syrian refugees through her school. Sad that children like her were forced to leave their homes, she wondered how she could help.

She began selling her chicken's eggs to benefit Syrian refugees. So far, Natalie has raised over \$800 for World Relief in Spokane, Washington. She has been amazed that: *"When you start something, everyone else is excited to finish. You just need to get them started."*

Reflection Questions:

- ❖ Who or what inspires me?
- ❖ What is my catalyst for getting started and making a positive difference in the world?
- ❖ How could I join in with others to turn an inspiring possibility into a reality?

Action Step:

I am inspired by _____.
I commit to practicing this quality today by: _____