So It Will Stand Still

Morning Reflections

VOLUME ONE

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Scott W Binder

Why I Write

Every morning since the first day of 2026, I've sat down, written something, and posted it to my Facebook timeline. It began as a suggestion from someone with more experience than me. Write it down, I was told, *so it will stand still long enough for you to look at it.*

Then share it. Something changes when I admit to another human being what I've found in myself. As long as it stays in my head, I can argue with it, bend it, or bury it. Once it's said out loud to someone else, it comes into the light. It stops being negotiable, and I can finally let it go.

That's what these are. They aren't lessons, and I'm not an expert on anything but my own mistakes. They're what was on my mind each morning, put on paper and then passed along.

Some days it's a resentment I needed to set down. Some days it's a walk on the trail, a conversation at the store, or an old computer taking its time with an update. Most days, it's some small piece of learning to trust something greater than myself.

I share them for one more reason. Someone might recognize themselves in one. If that's you, you're not alone.

Read them in order, or open to any page. Each morning stands on its own.

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Contents

January 2026

Just Another Morning....10
Eight Thousand Steps to Grace....12
The River of Surrender....13
From Resentment to Service....14
Assembling Joy One Piece at a Time....16
The Pilgrimage of Right Now....17
Today Is the Only Day....19
The Stone You Carry....20
The Hidden Cost of Asking for Help....21
Choosing Your Hard....24
Letting the Mud Settle....26
Anger as a Shield....27
The Poison I Drink Myself....28
One Soul at a Time....30
The Passenger and the Pilot....31
The Scarab at the Window....33
Losing True North....35
The Next Spiritually Indicated Action....37
When Willpower Isn't Enough....39
Psychological Kin....41
Divine Orchestration....43
The Kindness That Came Back Around....45
The Deleted Scenes of My Life....47
One Shelf at a Time....51
Faith, Fellowship, and Service....53
Bankrupt of Spirit, Rich in Grace....54
The Reset Button of Presence....56
Sharpening the Tools of Prayer....57
Drop the Rope....58
Belief Arriving in Fragments....60

The Technology of Service....61

February 2026

Seeds in the Garden of Spirit....63
Fear Fades Where Spirit Grows....64
The Latin Roots of Acceptance....65
A One Hundred Percent Success Rate....67
Acceptance Is Not Agreement....69
Nature as a Sacred Message....71
Ripples in a Pond....72
A Forest From One Wildflower....73
The Mask That Isolates....74
Until the Flower Becomes You....75
The Path of Least Resistance....76
The Classroom of Daily Life....77
Nature Doesn't Check a Clock....78
The Silent Observer of Thoughts....79
Day One of a Lifelong Project....80
Chained to the Craving....81
The House Built One Brick a Day....83
A Deep Breath for the Spirit....85
The Whole Book, Not the Cover....86
The Cost of a Cynical Heart....87
When We Stop Forcing the Outcome....88
Respect Before It's Earned....89
Confessions of a Fixer....90
Closing the Circle of Gratitude....92
Debugging My Spiritual Life....93
Spirituality by Subtraction....95
Testing a Feeling by Its Fruit....96
I Can't, God Can, Let Him....97

March 2026

Letting Spirit Do the Clearing....99

The Person Hard Work Makes You....100
Water Dripping on Stone....101
The Bridge Already Built....102
A Field, Not a Tightrope....103
Let Your Conscience Be Your Guide....104
A Ripple From Hello....106
I Don't Tell God What to Do....107
The Poisoned Well We All Share....108
Giving Away the Keys to Happiness....111
Letting Go of the Steering Wheel....113
The Season After the Storm....115
The Story I Told Myself....116
Service Is Where Value Begins....119
A Source That Never Runs Out....120
Pain as Prison or Purpose....122
Tracing Gratitude Back to Someone....124
Painting the Hull of a Sinking Ship....126
Something Much Older Than the Drink....127
The Blindness of Certainty....128
Show Me Who I Am....130
Sobriety Was Never My Decision....131
Pain, the Touchstone of Growth....133
Training for the Fears We Already Have....135
My Spiritual Doppler Radar....137
Easy Does It....139
Peace With What You Have....141
Shortcomings That Once Saved You....143
The Architect of Your Own Peace....144
The Most Honest Thing I Ever Did....145
God Speaks in Whispers....147

April 2026

Right Here, Right Now....151

Trading Hope for Familiar Misery....153
The Readiness to Say I'm Here....155
Patience as Surrender....157
Turning Outward From Fear....158
The Wisdom to Let Go....160
The Gift I Didn't Earn....162
One Long Thank You....164
Trickles That Become a River....165
Maintaining a Fit Spiritual Condition....166
Building a Storm in Your Head....168
No Checkbook Can Mend a Spirit....170
The Inlet and the Outlet....172
You Can't Carry Someone From a Burning House....173
Why an Alcoholic Can't Just Stop....174
The Luxury of Second-Guessing....176
The Humility of a Child....178
Undefeated So Far....180
My Father's Quiet Voice....182
The Lotus Blooms From Mud....183
When a Volunteer Fell, Others Stood Up....184
Letting Someone Hit Bottom....186
The Self-Will Behind My Helping....187
An Honest Start, Right Here....189
Being a Bridge, Not a Recruiter....191
The Bow, the Arrow, and the Aim....193
The Movie Playing in My Head....195
Acting Your Way Into Right Thinking....197
When Instinct Cannot Be Trusted....198
No Room for Debate....200

May 2026

Two Rituals, One Healing Journey....202
No Longer at War With the World....203

Keeping It by Giving It Away....205
Feelings Are Not Facts....206
A Channel Open at Both Ends....208
Friction as an Invitation....209
Growing Toward the Light....210
Taking Off Into the Headwind....212
Smashing the Illusion of Self-Sufficiency....214
Growing Up at Last....216
The Purpose of a Lonely Path....218
A Bird Doesn't Ask the Wind Its Meaning....220
The Part the World Cannot Warp....222
The Freedom From Seeking Approval....223
The Peace of Keeping Your Word....225
The Storm Is the Road....226
Volunteering as Medicine for the Soul....228
Leaping Before It Makes Sense....230
Money Has a Ceiling....231
Spiritual Checklists for Other People....233
When God Closes a Door....235
From Asking to Listening....236
A Position of Neutrality....238
The Boring Routine Is the Real Test....239
This Dirt Is in My DNA....240
Witnessing Thoughts Without Acting....242
Nobody Wakes Up Wanting Recovery....243
Holding Circumstances Differently....245
The Trap of Our Own Certainty....246
When the Performance Finally Cracks....247
Coming Like a Beggar, Not a Wish List....249

June 2026

From Performance to Overflow....252
Can't Reason Someone Out of a Feeling....254

An Open Journal, Typed Out Loud.....256
The Universe Doesn't Negotiate.....257
Sitting With Reality Instead of Arguing.....259
The Practice of Being Unbothered.....261
Terminal Uniqueness.....263
Judging Strangers on a Screen.....265
The Strength to Say I Don't Know.....267
Resentment Was Never About Them.....269
Ninety Minutes That Lift the Spirit.....271
Love I Didn't Have to Earn.....273
The Work Happens First.....274
A War With No Negotiation.....276
Launching Out Despite the Doubt.....278
Innocent Versus Pure.....280
Comparing My Insides to Their Outsides.....282
Too Heavy for One Set of Hands.....284
Safety Was Never About Control.....286
Picking Up Trash to Quiet My Head.....288
A Pile of Easy Things.....289
When the Voice Steps Back.....290
The Secret Is in the Dishes.....292
When Good Things Become Obstacles.....293
Enough Light for the Next Step.....294
Rehearsing a Disaster That Never Comes.....295
Quiet Power in Routine.....297
The Holiday Problem Drinkers Dread.....299
Surrender Is Not a Last Resort.....301
Serenity Was Never the Absence of Trouble.....303

January

Just Another Morning

Written January 1, 2026

New Year's morning. I was up at 3:30, same as always. The house is quiet, and the coffee's still hot.

For most of my life, January 1 came with a promise to myself. Stop drinking. Stop smoking. Finally get it together. I never wrote any of it down. I just thought it, meant it, and carried it around in my head. It never stood still long enough for me to look at it. By the middle of the month, it had drifted off, and so had my conviction.

I don't make those promises anymore. Not because I've stopped wanting to grow, but because I've learned how growth actually happens for me. It doesn't come in a year. It comes in a day.

A year is too big to hold. I can't carry twelve months of good intentions. I can barely carry one morning's worth. But one morning I can do. I can get up, get quiet, and ask what's needed of me today. Then I can try to do that one thing.

Today, the calendar says everything is new. But honestly, it's just another morning. The same sun

coming up over the neighbor's house. The same choice in front of me that's been there every day: run my own show, or trust something greater than myself to run it.

That choice doesn't wait for January. It shows up every morning, whether I've made a resolution or not.

Later today, I'll head to my usual noon meeting. Holidays can be hard on people who are struggling, and New Year's can be one of the hardest. If someone walks in needing help getting through it, I want to be there. Somebody was there for me.

So here's my only resolution this year. Show up tomorrow and do it again.

Happy New Year.

Eight Thousand Steps to Grace

Written January 2, 2026

When I walk my 8,000 steps every day, I am doing more than just helping my ankle heal; I am practicing a discipline that keeps my whole body healthy. I've realized that my spiritual life works the exact same way. Just as my ankle gets stiff if I stop moving, my spirit starts to feel heavy or disconnected if I neglect my daily walk with God.

The hardest part is that if I skip just one day, it becomes so much easier to make excuses the next day. This momentum of neglect is dangerous because it turns a small break into a deadly habit. By sticking to my daily steps, I remind myself that consistency is the key to staying strong. I have to show up for my spiritual health every single day with that same dedication, knowing that skipping out only makes the journey back to health much harder.

As the author Douglas Coupland noted, "If you don't have a spiritual practice in place when times are good, you can't expect to suddenly develop one during a moment of crisis."

I shall persevere.

The River of Surrender

Written January 3, 2026

The spiritual flow of power happens when you stop trying to control everything and instead trust in a Higher Power to guide you. It is like a river; when your life is "flowing," you are moving in the same direction as this Power, making things feel natural and much less like a struggle. This Power provides you with the strength, hope, and peace you need, especially during hard times when your own willpower isn't enough.

When you are in this flow, you might notice your intuition gets sharper and you feel more connected to the world around you. By letting go of your own ego and opening up to this greater force, you become a channel through which the Higher Power's energy can move to help both you and the people around you.

From Resentment to Service

Written January 4, 2026

In active alcoholism, my world was dominated by a "thinking problem" rooted in persistent resentment and bitterness. I found myself trapped in a cycle of negativity, constantly replaying past hurts and perceived injustices that fueled a sense of victimization and entitlement. This all-consuming internal dialogue served as an emotional anchor, making it impossible to see beyond my own grievances and justifying my continued self-absorption as a form of escape. My focus was entirely inward, not because of the alcohol itself, but because I was using it to numb the loud, angry voices of my own mind.

Recovery began when I started to dismantle this mental architecture, trading blame for personal accountability. As I learned to release these long-held grudges, the mental space once occupied by hostility naturally began to open up. This shift wasn't just a byproduct of sobriety; it was a deliberate transition from self-obsession to connection. Today, by quieting the resentments that once dictated my reality, I have regained the clarity to turn my attention outward. I no

longer view the world through the lens of what I am owed, but through the lens of how I can contribute, finally allowing me to be of genuine, selfless service to those around me. That change in psyche automatically took me from “How can this benefit me?” to “How can I help?”

Today I am a helper. If you think that you are alcoholic, please reach out. Recovery is available to anyone, if you have the capacity to be fundamentally honest. PM or text/call 707-599-5623.

Assembling Joy One Piece at a Time

Written January 5, 2026

Living a happy life is like putting together a puzzle without stressing over the final picture. Instead of worrying about how much is left to do, you find joy in the small "clicks"; those little daily moments when things just work out, like a good cup of coffee or a kind word from a friend. Much of our sadness comes from trying to make our lives look like someone else's puzzle box, but real happiness starts when you stop comparing and focus on the unique pieces you have right in front of you.

One also has to remember that every puzzle needs darker pieces to create a beautiful image. This means that hard times aren't "mistakes"; they are just the shadows that help the bright, happy parts of your life stand out more.

When you get overwhelmed, you simply step back to get a fresh view, or you invite a friend to help you sort through the mess. By focusing on one piece at a time and enjoying the process, you'll find that a beautiful life is built slowly and steadily, with peace found in every small connection you make.

The Pilgrimage of Right Now

Written January 6, 2026

I used to think that "being present" meant just sitting still, but I've learned that radical presence is actually a very active way to live. For me, it means I stop carrying around a heavy "backpack" of expectations about how things should go and instead focus entirely on what is happening right in front of me. I try to treat my past and future like they are just stories I tell myself; one has already happened and the other doesn't exist yet, so the only real place I can actually "walk" or take a step is right here in this moment. It's about using all my senses to really notice the world, whether I'm just listening to the sound of my own breath or paying close attention to the way my Contigo mug feels in my hands.

When I live this way, I don't get as overwhelmed by big goals because I've realized that the only way to finish any "pilgrimage" is to focus on one single step at a time. I stop trying to control every outcome and instead try to be a "witness" to my own life, accepting my thoughts and feelings without judging them as good or bad. This simple shift makes me feel much more capable and calm because I'm no longer fighting against things that

haven't happened yet. It turns my daily routine into a series of small, meaningful choices, where I'm fully "in" my body and my life rather than just watching it pass me by.

Today Is the Only Day

Written January 7, 2026

Real change isn’t something that just happens to you while you sit and wait; it’s an agreement with a Higher Power that requires you to move. It is easy to think you need to wait for the "perfect time" or a loud sign, but faith is demonstrated through action. You have only the present moment to make a choice, and today is the only day that truly exists in which you can enact change.

When you take even a tiny step forward today, you stop being a bystander and start walking the path that has been prepared for you. Don't waste the gift of Today by looking toward a tomorrow that isn't here yet; get moving and trust that the way will open up as you go.

The Stone You Carry

Written January 8, 2026

Holding onto resentment is like carrying around a heavy, jagged stone in your heart every day. Whether the event happened long ago or very recently, replaying the memory over and over keeps the pain alive, making your body feel like the hurt is happening right now. This constant stress can make you feel tired, angry, or lonely, and it acts like a "slow poison" that hurts the entirety of your health (mental, physical, and spiritual) and stops you from enjoying Today. Essentially, resentment makes you a prisoner to the past, making it hard to trust others or feel truly happy today.

One solution is to practice "surrender and release" through prayer and meditation. This means choosing to hand over your heavy burden of anger to a Higher Power, rather than trying to carry it yourself.

Many also find peace by praying for the person they resent, not to excuse what they did, but to free their own soul from being a prisoner to the past. By replacing bitter thoughts with a focus on gratitude, forgiveness, and compassion, you create space for healing power to enter your life.

The Hidden Cost of Asking for Help

Written January 9, 2026

A couple of people yesterday asked me why it is so hard to ask for help with alcoholism or addiction when it's very easy to ask for help in other areas of their lives, or with routine life tasks.It's because alcoholism isn't just a "thing you do." It's tangled up with who you think you are, how you cope, and how you survive. In my instance, it largely became my identity.

Asking for help with routine life stuff (fixing a car, moving furniture, learning tech, filling out a form) doesn't threaten your identity. It doesn't ask you to admit anything painful about yourself. It doesn't touch shame. It's practical, external, and socially neutral. No one hears "I need help changing a tire" and quietly judges your worth as a person.

Alcohol is different.

For a lot of people, drinking started as a solution. It helped with anxiety, loneliness, grief, stress, boredom, fitting in, or just getting through the day. So asking for help with alcoholism can feel like admitting the thing that helped you survive is now hurting you. That's

emotionally risky. You're not just asking for assistance, you're questioning your own coping system.

There's also shame layered in. Society still treats addiction as a moral failure rather than a human response to pain. Even when we know that's wrong, we've often internalized it. So asking for help can feel like saying: I'm weak, I failed, I should have handled this better. None of that is true, but feelings don't care about facts.

Then there's fear of exposure. Routine help keeps your inner world private. Asking for help with drinking means letting someone see behind the curtain. It raises scary questions.

And finally, there's grief. Even when alcohol has become a problem, it's still been a companion. Letting go, or even thinking about letting go, can feel like losing something familiar, predictable, and reliable. Asking for help means acknowledging that loss.

So the difficulty isn't weakness. It's depth.

The irony is that the moment someone asks for help with alcoholism, they are already doing something profoundly strong: choosing honesty over hiding,

connection over isolation, hope over habit. That step takes far more courage than asking for help with almost anything else.

Choosing Your Hard

Written January 10, 2026

It's okay to admit that you're tired of holding yourself up. We all look for a place to rest, and sometimes that place becomes a person, a bottle, a distraction, or a habit that promises to carry the weight for us. There is no shame in wanting the relief of a crutch when the world feels too heavy to bear on your own; leaning into something external is a natural response to being overwhelmed. But even that relief comes with its own kind of "hard." It's a quiet, heavy difficulty; the weight of knowing you aren't fully present in your own heart, and the fear of what happens if that external source ever disappears. It is the hard path of feeling yourself drift away, piece by piece, into a fog that offers comfort but takes your agency in return.

The other path is to stand on your own, and honestly, that is incredibly hard too. It's the "hard" of the quiet moments where you have to be your own sanctuary. Without that external source to muffle the sharp edges of the day, everything feels a little louder, a little colder, and much more vulnerable.

This is the Hard of Healing. It's the brave, exhausting

work of learning how to breathe through the discomfort instead of running from it. It's choosing to stay in the room with yourself, even when you don't like what you're thinking. It isn't a loud or flashy kind of strength; it's a soft, persistent courage that says, "I will be here for myself today, even if it's uncomfortable."

You are essentially choosing between two different types of struggle, but one of those struggles actually loves you back. One leads to a hollow end, while the other leads to a version of you that is whole, steady, and free. If you're going to pour your energy into something difficult, let it be the difficulty that helps you grow. You don't have to do it all at once, and you don't have to be perfect; you just have to be willing to try standing, even if your knees are shaking. Choosing your "hard" doesn't mean you have to be a warrior every second. It just means choosing the path that leads you back home to yourself.

It's hard…but it's your choice, and willingness is the key.

Letting the Mud Settle

Written January 11, 2026

When you get angry, your mind loses its natural balance and peace. Think of your mind like a clear pool of water; anger is like someone throwing a heavy stone into it, stirring up mud and making it impossible to see the bottom. In this state, your "thinking brain" shuts down and your "emotional brain" takes over, which overrides your accumulated wisdom and your ability to act rationally. Because your focus narrows only on the problem, you lose your connection to your spirit and your inner calm.

To find freedom from anger, many spiritual paths suggest looking at it as a form of "inner fire" that hurts you more than the person you are mad at.

Instead of fighting the anger, you can practice being a quiet observer of your feelings. By taking a deep breath and realizing that your peace is more valuable than being "right," you allow the mud in the water to settle. This shift helps you move from a place of reaction back to that place of compassion, reminding you that true strength comes from a steady, quiet heart rather than a loud or forceful one.

Anger as a Shield

Written January 12, 2026

Why do we choose anger, even though we know that doesn't solve anything?

We often choose anger over peace because it acts as a mental shield. When we feel hurt, ignored, or powerless, anger steps in to give us an instant boost of confidence and strength. It is much easier to feel "tough" and "right" than it is to admit we are feeling sad, scared, or embarrassed. In the heat of the moment, the mind views this rush of power as more useful for our protection than staying calm, even if it leaves us feeling drained and unbalanced later on.

Over time, this reaction becomes a deep-seated habit. We start playing God. If we are used to using anger to get our way or to defend ourselves, our mind begins to take that path automatically whenever things go wrong. We often hold onto rigid ideas about how the world "should" work or how people "should" behave, and when reality doesn't match those expectations, we feel personally attacked. This sense of unfairness makes it feel justified to get angry, distracting us from our deeper feelings and making us prioritize winning a conflict over keeping our inner peace.

The Poison I Drink Myself

Written January 13, 2026

I've come to realize that anger shows up when I lose touch with my inner spirit and let my ego take the wheel. The ego is the part of me that feels separate and needs to defend its pride. When I feel offended or things don't go my way, anger becomes a shield to feel powerful again. In those moments, I forget that my true nature, what I call my birth spirit, is calm, grounded, and connected. Instead, I get pulled into a false self that believes it has to fight to be seen or respected.

Anger also comes from attachment. I hold onto ideas of how life should look and how people should behave. When reality doesn't match my expectations, friction follows. Many spiritual traditions say anger is a poison I drink while hoping someone else suffers. I cling to it because I haven't fully learned acceptance, the ability to let life unfold without trying to control it. I think anger will change the world, but it only burns down my own inner house.

When I need to return to center, I offer this simple prayer:

Spirit, help me release the need to be right and the desire to control. Quiet my ego and soften this anger. Remind me that my peace comes from within, not from the world around me. Help me see others with compassion and return my heart to balance.

One Soul at a Time

Written January 14, 2026

It is natural to feel a deep moral call to stand against what is wrong. We carried the light of those who came before us and refused to stay silent. But if we spend all our energy fighting the darkness, we can forget the light we are trying to protect. Without love, our desire for justice can make our hearts hard and our spirits impatient.

To create a better world, we must do more than talk about it; we must live it. A world of dignity grows one soul at a time through simple kindness.

Before rushing out to fix the world, ask yourself: *Who is near me right now that needs help?* By showing up for others with a quiet heart, we practice the most sacred form of change there is.

The Passenger and the Pilot

Written January 15, 2026

Living as your conscience dictates is essentially a journey of moving from noise to stillness. The ego is like a loud, restless passenger in your mind who insists on being ignored, forgotten, or mistreated. It thinks it has to fight for everything. But your conscience is like the steady pilot who already knows the way home. To hear that pilot, you do not need to kick the passenger out of the car; you just need to stop letting them grab the steering wheel. You do this by realizing that the loud, defensive voice in your head isn't actually you. It is just something you are hearing. Once you realize you are the listener and not the noise, the ego starts to lose its power over your choices.

Spiritual growth happens in the small moments when you feel a squeeze in your chest. That is the ego wanting to be right, to get even, or to look important. In those moments, you choose to breathe and let that feeling pass instead of acting on it. Every time you choose kindness over being right, or honesty over looking good, you are feeding your spirit and starving your ego. You do not have to be perfect; you just have to

be willing to be quiet enough to hear that still, small voice inside you. Over time, as you trust that inner voice more, the ego's demands start to feel less like commands and more like background noise that you can simply ignore. It will always be there, but with awareness we are able to choose.

The Scarab at the Window

Written January 16, 2026

Imagine a person standing at a crossroads in life, feeling as though they are shouting into a silent void. They are looking for a sign or a sense of direction, yet the world around them appears to be nothing more than a series of random, disconnected events. Then, at the height of their uncertainty, a bridge suddenly forms between their spirit and the physical world. A specific song plays on the radio the moment they think of a lost friend, or a stranger repeats a phrase that had been circling in their mind all morning. These are spiritual coincidences, moments where the clockwork of the universe seems to pause to deliver a personal message.

These occurrences suggest that there is a hidden rhythm to existence that transcends simple cause and effect. The psychologist Carl Jung famously captured this phenomenon through his experience with a patient who was trapped by her own rigid logic. While she was describing a dream about a golden scarab beetle, a real beetle with a metallic gold shell began tapping at the office window. When Jung caught the insect and presented it to her, the sheer impossibility of the timing

broke through her skepticism. It was a physical manifestation of her internal state, proving that the boundary between spirit and the environment is much thinner than we often believe.

When such an event occurs, it feels less like a mathematical fluke and more like a wink from God. It invites a person to stop viewing themselves as an isolated observer and instead see themselves as an active participant in a living, breathing tapestry. Whether we call it synchronicity or a miracle, the effect is the same. It provides a profound sense of belonging and the comforting realization that, even in moments of deep isolation, we are being heard.

These events happen every day. We just need to expect them, seek them, and call them what they are: the Hand of God working in our lives.

Losing True North

Written January 17, 2026

When you force your own self-will over the natural guidance of your spirit, you are essentially choosing a path of friction that slowly wears down your inner peace and spiritual strength. Think of your spirit as a compass designed to lead you toward growth and fulfillment; when you ignore it to chase ego-driven desires, you lose your internal "true north" and begin to feel a deep, nagging sense of restlessness or emptiness. This misalignment can lead to "spiritual stagnation," where you feel stuck or "lukewarm" in your life, losing the passion and joy that come from being truly connected to your purpose.

Over time, this damage shows up as a heavy exhaustion that rest cannot fix, because your energy is being drained by the constant effort of pretending to be someone you aren't. Spiritually, you may feel unprotected or vulnerable, as if you've stepped out from under a shield of divine grace and are now struggling against life's challenges entirely on your own. That still inner voice, which once whispered gentle guidance, may begin to feel like a "roar" of anxiety or dissatisfaction as

it tries to redirect you. Ultimately, forcing your own way robs you of the blessings and ease that come when you surrender to a higher flow and allow your spirit to lead.

The Next Spiritually Indicated Action

Written January 18, 2026

Many of us have heard the expression 'Just do the next right thing.' What is the next right thing, anyway?

Doing the next right thing is a simple way to walk through life with peace, especially when the path ahead looks foggy or overwhelming. Instead of trying to figure out your whole future or fix every problem at once, you simply quiet your mind and ask what God or the universe is asking of you in this very moment.

It is an act of deep trust, believing that if you take just one faithful step, the light will move forward to show you the next one. This practice keeps you grounded in the present, where your spirit actually lives, rather than letting your mind drift into worries about yesterday or tomorrow. When you focus on doing the small, kind, or necessary thing right in front of you, you are aligning yourself with a higher purpose and finding a quiet rhythm that leads you exactly where you need to be.

Those in my orbit know that I call it something else: Taking the next spiritually-indicated action. This shifts

the focus from my own willpower to a sense of divine guidance. I'm not just making a random choice, but I'm listening for a "nudge" from a higher source to show the way. If a proposed action sits on my heart in a serene fashion, I am confident that it was inspired and the 'right thing.'

When Willpower Isn't Enough

Written January 19, 2026

I was chatting with a couple of guys this morning who want to stop drinking, but they keep trying to do so on their own, using the same method, sheer willpower. It's evident that isn't working, yet they are not willing to try something different.

People keep repeating the same old thing because alcoholism hijacks the brain's "common sense" center. When someone is stuck, their brain's logic gets replaced by a survival habit that fears change more than it fears the problem. They keep trying "willpower" because it's the only tool they know, even if that tool is broken. This creates a loop where they feel like they just need to "try harder" next time, rather than realizing they need a completely different strategy. Their mind is essentially stuck in a rut, and the more they struggle using their own strength, the deeper that rut becomes.

A different solution is to stop fighting and "surrender." This doesn't mean giving up; it means admitting that your own way isn't working and asking for help from a Higher Power, however you understand it. By letting go of the need to be in control, you quiet the "panic" in

your brain and become open to new ideas. This shift moves you from a lonely battle of willpower to a path of faith and connection. It replaces the empty "void" that people often try to fill with substances with a sense of peace and purpose, making the old habits lose their power. Old thoughts and ideas give way to new, more healthy thoughts and ideas…and we simply just go from there.

Psychological Kin

Written January 20, 2026

Why is it that when strangers with a common problem instantly start feeling like family when gathered in a group?

It’s a powerful feeling, and it mostly happens because the "wall" we usually

keep up around strangers disappears when we realize they truly understand our internal world. In everyday life, we often have to explain ourselves or hide our struggles to fit in. But in a group with a common problem, that exhausting work stops. You don't have to translate your pain or frustration because everyone else is already speaking your "language." This creates an instant sense of safety and validation that usually takes years to build with friends or family.

Psychologists also point to something called identity fusion. When we go through a hard time, it becomes a huge part of who we are. When we meet others going through the same thing, our brains stop seeing them as "others" and start seeing them as an extension of ourselves. Because you share the same struggle, your

brain treats them like psychological kin. You aren't just two strangers talking; you are two people surviving the same storm, which triggers a deep, ancient survival instinct to protect and trust one another like a tribe.

Finally, there is a unique freedom in these groups because there is no history or judgment. Unlike real family, who might remember your past mistakes or have expectations of who you "should" be, these strangers see you exactly as you are in the moment. This "uncluttered" connection allows for a level of honesty that is rare in normal life. You feel like family because, for the first time in a long time, you feel completely seen and accepted without having to prove anything.

…and it's a wonderful experience to have.

Divine Orchestration

Written January 21, 2026

Imagine a man arrested for a DUI. His wife is at the end of her rope with his drunkenness, and is likely to move on with her life. The man decides to go to a certain recovery meeting, get some literature to prove to her that he went in order to smooth things over. He didn't intend on getting sober. He just wanted to get out of trouble. He liked what he heard at that meeting, and kept going back. In the process, his life changed forever for the better and he hasn't had a drink in years now.

If the man had never been arrested for a DUI, then he never would have felt the desperate pressure to save his marriage. If he hadn't been trying to "fake" his way into his wife's good graces, then he never would have stepped foot into that specific recovery meeting to get the literature. Finally, if he hadn't been sitting in that exact room at that exact time, then he never would have heard the specific message that finally changed his heart.

Divine orchestration is the idea that a higher power is quietly organizing the events of your life behind the scenes. It suggests that there are no accidents, only hidden plans meant to help you grow or find the right

path.

This belief teaches that even when things seem chaotic or disappointing, everything is happening at the perfect time. Instead of seeing a setback as a failure, you see it as a setup for something better. It's like being part of a giant song where even the wrong notes are eventually used to make a beautiful melody.

This perspective offers a sense of peace in the face of life's unpredictability. It suggests that even the most painful mistakes can be repurposed into a fresh start. By trusting that a larger plan is at work, a person can find the strength to move forward, knowing that today's struggle might be the very thing that leads to tomorrow's transformation.

The Kindness That Came Back Around

Written January 22, 2026

An elderly man named Elias noticed a young traveler looking distraught over a flat bicycle tire near a bench at Hiller Park. Without a word, Elias brought his tools from his old pickup truck and fixed it, refusing any payment. "Just pass it on," he said with a wink.

The traveler, a college student named Leo, felt a surge of gratitude. Later that afternoon, he stopped by Ramone's for a coffee. Inside, he noticed a frazzled employee drop a tray of pastries. While others stared, Leo jumped up to help her clear the mess and left a generous tip he had originally saved for a souvenir.

The server, Sarah, touched by the stranger's grace, went home with a lighter heart. That evening, instead of collapsing on the couch, she took the time to check on her elderly neighbor, Mrs. Morgan, bringing her a bowl of soup she had made the previous evening.

Mrs. Morgan, feeling seen and cared for, decided to call her son to recount her day. It's been a while since they have spoken. Her son, a busy account manager in

Eureka, chatted with his mother for a while and hung up the phone with a smile. The next morning, he walked into his office and, instead of criticizing John, a junior sales associate, over a mistake, he offered to mentor him through the fix.

The young associate went home less stressed and finally found the patience to play catch with his young son at Hiller Park. As they played near the playground, a man sitting on a nearby bench watched them and smiled, his own weary spirit lifted by their laughter.

That man was Elias. The kindness he had planted at that very place had traveled through many hearts, only to find its way back to him in his favorite local park when he needed a smile the most.

In small communities, kindness creates a chain effect of forward-facing gratitude. When you do something nice for a neighbor, that feeling doesn't just stop there; it moves from person to person, growing as it goes. As people tend to be more connected, the good energy you put out into the world has a beautiful way of traveling through others and eventually finding its way back to where it started in the first place.

The Deleted Scenes of My Life

Written January 23, 2026

In my late teens, I was confident I could achieve anything through discipline and proper planning. I joined the military, served my tour, and excelled in my duties. After my discharge, I entered the restaurant industry, starting as a dishwasher at a small, upscale restaurant in Trinidad and working my way up to become a skilled line cook. My natural ability to multitask made success feel seamless.

Eventually, I moved to Eureka to code custom software for a distribution firm's new IBM PC, a role I landed using skills I had garnered over years as a computer hobbyist. After that, I returned to Arcata and ended up managing the best pizza place in town. At every turn, I succeeded; I felt happy, secure, and capable.

Years later, I met and married my wife, Miss K. To provide the home she dreamed of, I took a leap into a commission-only wholesale distribution job with zero prior experience. I learned as I went, my confidence grew, and I eventually built the route into a lucrative business. We bought our brand-new house, but with that mortgage came a new, terrifying companion: "future

tripping." I began spiraling into imaginary fears, obsessing over "what if" scenarios where we lost everything. Having never doubted myself before, this mental siege was paralyzing, and I turned to alcohol to cope.

Drinking didn't solve the fear; it simply made me stop caring about it. But that relief was a trap. I fell into a vicious cycle of full-blown alcoholism, resulting in immense wreckage. My fear finally became tangible: I had lost the power of choice. No amount of willpower could stop me from picking up the next drink.

Many years later, I found recovery when I wasn't even looking for it. Though I stopped drinking, the self-doubt and irrational anxiety remained.

Regaining my sense of worth took time and the heavy lifting of a supportive fellowship. They encouraged me to step out in faith once again, just as I had years prior.

I wanted to give back, so I applied for a seat on the McKinleyville Community Services District (MCSD) Parks and Recreation Committee. I served there for two years, bolstered by others who insisted I had much to contribute. That gave me the courage to run for the

MCSD Board of Directors in 2020. My community rewarded me with their votes, and I am now in my second term, having served as Board President in 2024. That same year, I was honored as the Grand Marshal of the Pony Express Days Parade. Today, I serve concurrently as Vice Chair of the McKinleyville Municipal Advisory Committee and find deep fulfillment directing the Senior Center.

This transformation happened because others saw a potential in me that I couldn't see myself. When I was stuck in self-doubt, it was like looking at my life through dirty glasses. I was so focused on my internal flaws and "behind-the-scenes" mistakes that they obscured everything else. I mistakenly believed my worth was defined by my nerves and my near-failures. While I was living inside the messy process of being human, others were watching the results.

They had a clearer perspective because they were standing further back. They weren't tuned into my insecurities; they saw my actions, my kindness, and my resilience. They saw the "final cut" of my life while I was obsessing over the deleted scenes. Now, I no longer suffer from that crippling doubt, though I remain

teachable. My mission now is to help others see their own value and encourage them to step out in faith, because I know firsthand that if I can do it, so can they.

One Shelf at a Time

Written January 24, 2026

Imagine you have a massive, cluttered garage that has been stressing you out for months. If you look at the whole mess and think, "I have to get this entire thing spotless," you'll likely feel defeated and just close the door.

Instead, you decide to rely on a bit of faith and just focus on cleaning one single shelf today. You stop worrying about the boxes in the corner or how long the whole project will take; you just commit to doing that one small part and letting go of the rest for now.

By focusing only on that one shelf, you wake up tomorrow with a clean shelf. You've removed a tiny bit of the "wreckage" from your environment, and you didn't burn yourself out trying to be a superhero. Because you weren't relying on your own limited energy to fix everything at once, but rather a steady discipline to just do one thing, you find that the task becomes manageable. One shelf at a time, the stress begins to lift, and eventually, you look back to realize the entire space has transformed. It happened not through a massive explosion of willpower, but through simple, daily

faithfulness.

This philosophy of cleaning "one shelf" at a time can transform almost every part of our lives because it trades the pressure of being perfect for the power of being consistent. In our health, we often fail because we try to change every meal and exercise habit overnight. Instead, if we just focus on eating one healthy breakfast or getting outside to walk even a small distance, we stop fighting our own exhaustion. Over time, those small choices add up and pay off, not because we did something heroic once, but because we did something small every day.

Faith, Fellowship, and Service

Written January 25, 2026

In simple terms, our life's journey is about moving away from being selfish or just caring about "things" and instead focusing on being better, kinder people.

This shift happens when we use three main tools: faith, fellowship, and service. Faith is about letting go of the need to control everything and trusting that there is a bigger, better plan for us, which brings us a sense of peace. Fellowship means we don't try to go through life alone; we connect with others, support each other, and realize that we are all in this together. Finally, service is the simple act of helping someone else, which actually helps us get out of our own heads and feel more useful.

When we live this way, even the toughest problems in our relationships start to get better because we are focused on giving rather than just taking.

Bankrupt of Spirit, Rich in Grace

Written January 26, 2026

For a long time, I lived behind a fortress of my own making, fueled by the belief that if I just tried harder, thought faster, or controlled more variables, I could fill the emptiness inside me. I viewed my struggles as obstacles to be crushed and my emotional pain as a weakness to be hidden. But eventually, the walls I built to protect myself became my prison. My "bottom" wasn't a dramatic crash, just one quiet morning when I realized that every tool I possessed was utterly useless against the weight of my own life. I was bankrupt of spirit, standing at the end of a long, dark corridor with nowhere left to turn.

In that moment of total defeat, something strange happened: the fighting stopped. I didn't "win" or "solve" anything; I simply ran out of the strength required to keep pretending. I slumped in my chair and admitted, for the first time with total honesty, that I was finished. This wasn't a surrender of my life, but a surrender of my illusion of control. In that space where my ego used to be, a sudden, inexplicable stillness took root. I realized that this feeling of brokenness was actually the only

thing that could make me honest enough to change.

As I began to walk forward from that point, the pain didn't vanish, but its nature changed. I stopped seeing my past as a series of failures and started seeing it as a necessary education. Under this new lens of grace, the burden of my old regrets began to form into something far more valuable. I found that I could look at another person in the depths of their own despair and, instead of judging them, I could offer them a hand because I had been there. The reality of my own pain, which I once spent so much energy concealing, became the very thing that allowed me to connect with others on a level I never thought possible.

Today, the end result is a life that feels lighter and far more grounded. I no longer live in fear of the next crisis, because I have learned that the difficult moments are simply more fuel for growth. I am not perfect, and the journey is slow, but I am moving. I now realize that my greatest suffering was not a detour from my life, but the very foundation upon which a new, authentic self could be built. I am no longer a victim of my history; I am a student of it, finding that in letting go, I finally given the grace to stand.

The Reset Button of Presence

Written January 27, 2026

Just for today, I need to unplug and reconnect with something bigger than myself. I've realized that finding that spiritual alignment feels way more grounding than any material success or physical comfort ever could. I'm looking for that deep, inner stillness where I can truly feel God's presence. Even just a second of that connection hits the 'reset' button on my stress and the chaos of daily life. It leaves me feeling whole and balanced, giving me the energy to actually show up for the people around me. That connection is the ultimate healer. I just need to lean in and feel it.

Sharpening the Tools of Prayer

Written January 28, 2026

Think of your time in prayer and meditation as the moments you sharpen your tools; if you cut that time short to stay busy, you might end up working for hours without actually accomplishing anything meaningful. Divine perspective is different from ours; it values quality and spiritual readiness over raw "busyness." To a master craftsman, a dull tool that grinds away all day but produces poor results is far less valuable than a sharp, well-prepared instrument that is used for only a short time but produces flawless work.

Just for today, I resolve to remain sharp and well-prepared for the work that He may assign.

Drop the Rope

Written January 29, 2026

A mentor once said to me, “If it isn’t going to bother you in an hour, don’t let it bother you for a minute.” There’s a lot of truth to that, and it can cause real damage. Let’s face it; most of life’s irritations are of this variety.

This problem starts when something small goes wrong and you "hook" onto it. It could be a spilled drink or a grumpy person in line, but instead of letting it pass, your mind grabs it. You start a conversation in your head about how unfair it is or what you should have said back. This is your ego trying to fix the past. It turns a tiny, one-minute blip into a heavy weight that you carry around, making you feel tired, tense, and distracted from the good things happening right in front of you.

The solution is to simply "drop the rope." Imagine you are in a tug-of-war with a problem that doesn't actually matter. To win, you don't have to pull harder; you just let go. When you feel that spark of annoyance, take one breath and remind yourself that this moment is already over. By choosing not to feed the thought, you keep your spirit light. You realize that your happiness is

worth way more than being "right" about a small mistake, so you just leave it behind and keep walking… and keep your peace.

Belief Arriving in Fragments

Written January 30, 2026

Belief in a source of strength greater than myself didn't happen overnight. It arrived in fragments, sparked by listening to others describe challenges I hadn't yet faced with a clarity I didn't yet possess. Witnessing them navigate life's storms with a quiet, internal resilience gave me the hope that I, too, could tap into that same grace.

Eventually, I realized that a spiritual foundation that remains steady regardless of external circumstances is truly attainable. Today, that connection, combined with a commitment to honesty, an open mind, and a willingness to do the inner work, provides the serenity I once thought impossible.

The Technology of Service

Written January 31, 2026

We often hear that helping others "makes us feel good," but the truth runs much deeper. In almost every spiritual tradition, service is considered a vital technology for dissolving the ego. When we focus on another's needs, we momentarily step out of that place of constant worry and comparison and enter a state of interconnectedness.

By serving, we stop seeing the world as a collection of separate pieces and start experiencing it as a single, living whole. This is the path of spiritual reciprocity: the more we empty ourselves of "I" and "mine," the more room we create for inner peace, clarity, and grace to flow in. Altruism isn't just a moral choice; it is a spiritual practice that reminds us there is no "other" to serve. We are simply one soul looking after itself in many different forms.

When you reach out a hand, you aren't just changing someone else's world; you are realigning your own. In the quiet act of giving, we find the very thing we were searching for all along: a sense of belonging to something infinite.

February

Seeds in the Garden of Spirit

Written February 1, 2026

We don't have to surmount great challenges to accomplish great goals. Just focus on doing the little things, the tiny actions that each of us can take every day to make things just a little nicer for others and yourself. Simple little kindnesses have a tremendous cumulative effect as we go forth in the world.

When we focus on small, faithful actions, we are participating in a spiritual law of growth. Just as a tiny seed holds the blueprint for one of our Redwood trees, our smallest daily efforts such as a moment of prayer, a kind word, or a breath of gratitude, plant seeds in the garden of our spirit. We often look for grand miracles or sudden shifts, but the Divine usually works in the quiet, steady rhythm of the "now."

By staying consistent, we demonstrate a deep trust that every little act of love is seen and valued. Over time, these brief moments weave together into a life of peace and purpose, showing us that greatness isn't found in the big things, but in taking those tiny actions as we walk the path of life one small step at a time.

Fear Fades Where Spirit Grows

Written February 2, 2026

One can learn to release anxiety because fear is a negative energy that fades when an individual connects with the strength of their own spirit. When someone makes space for this inner power, fear naturally loses its grip. It is a weight that holds back personal growth and simply cannot exist alongside true reliance on innate spiritual guidance.

Though the world is currently heavy with worry as people fear poverty, isolation, or war, it is not necessary to struggle against these feelings through sheer force. Instead of fighting fear, an individual can lean into this resilient power within themselves. By deepening the connection to their own spirit, they will find that they simply outgrow those old terrors. One should never use fear or the threat of judgment to influence others, as that is not the way of a centered mind. By trusting that a more peaceful path exists and looking inward for guidance, an individual allows their own spirit to show them the way.

The Latin Roots of Acceptance

Written February 3, 2026

Today's topic at the noon meeting was 'acceptance.' Many definitions and applications for acceptance were shared in that hour, and I wanted to highlight three that come to mind.

Acceptance is the cornerstone of our shared path, serving as the bridge from a shattered past to a stable present.

The first is accepting the truth about ourselves. For a long time, we lived in a state of refusal, convincing ourselves that we were in control while our lives crumbled. Acceptance begins when we stop fighting the reality of our condition. It is the exact opposite of the denial that once blinded us; it is the honest admission that things are as they are, that they are affecting us, and that we are powerless to change them through our own will alone. There has to be at least a modicum of acceptance present in one's mind to decide to give recovery an initial shot and walk through the doors for the very first time.

The second is accepting that we are not alone. We do

not walk this path in isolation. Our group is a collective of individuals who have faced the same devastating struggle and found ourselves defeated by the same enemy. Acceptance in this fellowship means recognizing that we are not unique in our suffering. By joining together and embracing a single, proven solution, we find a strength that none of us possessed individually. We identify as alcoholics in our meetings. The Latin root of the word identity is identitas, meaning 'oneness' or 'sameness.' At the end of our meetings, we accept the hand of the person next to us, knowing their struggle is our own.

The third, and deepest, is accepting help as a gift. This requires an 'acceptionem,' the Latin root meaning a receiving or an acceptance of a gift. We acknowledge that our own resources have failed us, and we open ourselves to receive a spiritual solution from a Power greater than ourselves. This is not a begrudging surrender, but a willing reception of grace and guidance. By accepting this higher help, we find the peace and direction necessary to build a new way of living.

A One Hundred Percent Success Rate

Written February 4, 2026

As I scroll this morning down my Facebook timeline, I see a lot of fear. Every day seems to be the same; people are scared of what might happen tomorrow. I was no different. I lived this way for years. It was almost like I was either looking for a new problem to dwell upon, or imagining a worst case scenario for a problem that I already have. That's a heck of a way to live; choosing familiar misery. I knew how to survive that, but it certainly didn't contribute to a good quality of living.

One thing never occurred to me, and when it did, it was life-changing: I've had a lot of challenges throughout my life, but look at where I am: I've made it through every single tough break and seemingly impossible moment life has thrown my way. That's a 100% success rate, and that kind of history isn't just luck. It's a telling sign that I've been watched over and given the strength to keep standing, no matter what.

It's okay for me to breathe a little easier knowing I don't have to carry the future all by myself. I've already

proven that with a little faith and trust in the universe, I can handle anything. By leaving the big stuff in God's hands and trusting His timing, I can stop worrying about the "what ifs" and just focus on what I need to do today. After all, the track record speaks for itself. 😉

Have a good morning, friends!

Acceptance Is Not Agreement

Written February 5, 2026

There are a lot of things that people "can't accept" in this world: the loss of a loved one, the unfairness of a career setback, or the sudden end of a long-term relationship. We often use that phrase to describe the sheer weight of our shock or the deep sense of injustice we feel, as if this acknowledgment would somehow mean we agree with it. That isn't the case at all.

Acceptance is the act of looking at a painful situation and saying, "This is real, and this is affecting me." It is a vital concession that the problem is not a figment of your imagination or something that can be wished away; it is an actual, tangible presence in your life. By validating the reality of the obstacle (and it IS an obstacle), you honor the weight of its impact on your emotions and your peace of mind. Refusing to downplay the situation allows you to stop gaslighting your own experience, providing the honest foundation required to begin the work of moving through it.

By admitting that the problem truly affects you, you drop the mask of "being fine" and allow yourself to process the actual gravity of the moment. This

recognition is not a weakness, but a tool that one can use to legitimize reality; you cannot fix a leak if you refuse to admit the floor is wet. Once you acknowledge the actuality of the burden, you can finally stop trying to faux-carry it and start finding the practical resources or inner strength needed to overcome this crippling form of denial.

Nature as a Sacred Message

Written February 6, 2026

Nature is the physical form of God's thoughts on beauty. You might find it helpful to treat every part of the natural world as a sacred message, much like an inspired thought. Seeing the world through this lens can reveal a fresh, new energy for life. By staying close to nature through its highs and lows, you may find yourself opening up to receiving deep spiritual blessings.

This perspective matters because healing often comes not just from intellectual beliefs, but from experiencing the spiritual presence in a simple flower or its scent. Living with this awareness allows you to experience the peace of a world without blemish, even if but for a moment; a life that can be defined by pure joy.

Ripples in a Pond

Written February 7, 2026

In a personal form, the Butterfly Effect is the concept that even your smallest actions or thoughts act like tiny ripples in a pond, eventually growing into large waves that shape your entire life and the world around you.

It shows that your smallest choices act like seeds that grow into your future reality. For example, if you choose to start your morning with a few minutes of meditation instead of checking the news headlines, then you shift your energy from stress to abundance, which changes how you react to everyone you meet that day. Similarly, if you listen to your intuition and offer a sincere compliment to a struggling friend, then you might provide the exact spark of hope they need to keep going, creating a ripple of positivity that extends far beyond that single conversation. These tiny moments prove that you are never powerless; every small "if" creates a "then" that shapes the course of your life.

Just for today, I will strive to consciously plant one small seed of kindness or light. I know firsthand the benefit of becoming a channel for spiritual flow, and its effect sustains me until the next opportunity arises, and such opportunities seem to be endless.

A Forest From One Wildflower

Written February 8, 2026

To connect with your spirit, you must first quiet your heart and let your senses fall still. While your senses link you to the physical world, they act like static when you're trying to reach a spiritual level; you have to tune them out to truly connect.

Search for the good in everyone and cherish it. Stay humble, spread love, and keep life lighthearted. Just as a wildflower scatters its seeds on the wind to bloom in places it will never see, the joy you plant today will grow into a vast forest of happiness that lasts for generations.

The Mask That Isolates

Written February 9, 2026

When you choose to be dishonest, you create a split within your own spirit. You are essentially trying to live two different lives; one that is true and one that is a mask, which drains your energy and replaces your inner peace with a constant, quiet anxiety. This builds a wall between you and the light of truth, making you feel isolated even when you are surrounded by people.

Each lie acts like a small weight on your heart, gradually hardening your conscience until it becomes difficult to feel genuine joy or connection.

By abandoning the truth, you distance yourself from your spirit, the part of you that is connected to the divine or the universe. This fracture makes it harder to trust others because you begin to project your own deceit onto the world around you. Ultimately, dishonesty doesn't just trick someone else; it imprisons your soul in a shadow version of reality, preventing the growth and freedom that can only come from living with an open and honest heart.

Until the Flower Becomes You

Written February 10, 2026

The universe is always with you. Just as a beautiful flower is an expression of a wonderful idea, you are an expression of the universe's highest qualities.

Think of yourself as a reflection of the best parts of existence. Because of this, try to care for your inner spirit, your mind, your health, and even how you present yourself. Aim to be the best possible version of who you are.

Absorb the beauty around you. When you truly notice the grace of a tree or a flower, it leaves an imprint on your soul that shows up in how you act.

Even during difficult times or when facing challenges, never stop looking for the beauty in the world.

Look at a flower until its beauty feels like a part of you. Later, you will give that beauty back to the world through a smile, a kind word, or a helpful thought. Listen to the birds and let their music settle into your heart. Laugh more, love more, and remember that you are never alone. You are connected to everything.

The Path of Least Resistance

Written February 11, 2026

Inner peace and a clear heart are the foundation of a conscious life. Always choose the path of least resistance. Overthinking is just a mental trap that creates unnecessary complexity; life only gets heavy if you allow your mind to clutter it. If you give all your energy to your shadows and struggles, it displaces today's serenity.

Remember: you have the power to resolve a challenge, release it to the universe, or substitute it for deeper grace. Honor the small, sacred moments. Your standard for success should never be the ego's pursuit of wealth and power, but the richness of your own spirit.

The Classroom of Daily Life

Written February 12, 2026

The messy parts, the boring routines, and the unexpected challenges of daily life aren't distractions from your spiritual growth; these form the actual classroom where that growth happens. Instead of waiting for life to get easier or quieter so you can focus on your faith, this perspective encourages you to see your current situation as the specific tool being used to shape your character. Every difficult conversation, stressor, or moment of joy is an opportunity to practice patience, trust, or gratitude in real time.

Essentially, spiritual progress doesn't happen in a vacuum or only when you are sitting in a quiet room praying. It happens when you are forced to deal with reality. If you are facing a hardship, the belief is that the hardship isn't a roadblock standing in the way of your "real" spiritual life; rather, the way you navigate that hardship IS your spiritual life. By embracing your circumstances instead of fighting them, you allow your experiences to refine you and deepen your understanding of yourself and your beliefs.

Nature Doesn't Check a Clock

Written February 13, 2026

I often mention that my life is run by the clock, the calendar, and my task list. If I'm not careful, my days become nothing more than a series of boxes to check and minutes to account for. While these tools keep me organized, they can also make me feel like I'm just another cog in the machine, disconnected from anything deeper.

That's why I make it a point each day to step outside and get into nature. When I'm in the forest or alongside the Mad River or the ocean, the pressure of my task list finally stops buzzing in my head. The clock doesn't matter as much because nature moves at its own pace; the sun rises and the seasons change without needing me to manage them. It's the best place where I can truly quiet my mind.

Taking this time isn't just a break; it's how I stay human. It reminds me that I am more than just my productivity. By putting "nature time" on my calendar, I'm actually making room for my soul to breathe. I come back to work feeling more grounded and steady, knowing that even though my schedule is full, my spirit is happy.

The Silent Observer of Thoughts

Written February 14, 2026

Peace comes when you stop fighting with the way things currently are. When you settle your thoughts and simply accept the truth of this moment, the heavy weight of your worries starts to lift. By meeting life exactly where it is, without adding extra drama or fear, you find that the path ahead naturally becomes smoother and your heart feels much lighter.

To quiet the noise, you must first recognize that you are the silent observer of your thoughts, not the thoughts themselves. This being realized, you're more able to move through this awareness without having to grab onto them.

Day One of a Lifelong Project

Written February 15, 2026

Think of a decision to embrace a higher calling. It's the moment one stops standing on the sidelines and actually starts the work. It's the Day 1 of a lifelong project.

For me, spirituality just means focusing on the internal stuff that actually matters, like my character, rather than just chasing money or status. It's about trying to live the way my Spirit would want me to live.

When I'm doing it right, I feel things like unconditional love, joy, patience, and humility. But when I let my ego take over with selfish, dishonest, or resentful motives, I lose that connection.

I'm not trying to be perfect; I'm just trying to be better than I was yesterday.

Chained to the Craving

Written February 16, 2026

To break a habit or a mindset that controls you, you first have to face a hard truth: you are responsible for where you are because, at some point, you gave in to it. If you feel like a slave to your impulses or selfishness, it's because you chose to let those parts of yourself take the lead. On the flip side, the only way to find peace is to intentionally choose to align yourself with a higher spiritual power.

We see how this works in the smallest ways. You might tell yourself, "I can stop whenever I want," but you usually can't. If you try, you'll realize just how much that habit actually dominates you. Small acts of selfishness or the need for instant gratification can quickly turn into a mental prison.

Once you let a craving take over, thinking "I must have this right now", you become chained to it, even if you hate the person you've become.

No amount of human willpower alone can break the chains of a character built on giving in to every urge. Only a true spiritual transformation is strong enough.

You have to let go of your pride and surrender to the Universal Source of life and healing. It's easy to talk about being free while still living as a prisoner to your own impulses. True freedom only happens when you stop trying to do it all yourself and let a higher power lead the way.

The House Built One Brick a Day

Written February 17, 2026

In our daily lives, it's easy to feel like the little things, such as having a glass of water before your morning coffee, don't matter much in the moment.

However, trusting your path means understanding that these small efforts that you do each day are like bricks. One brick doesn't look like much, but if you keep laying them daily, you eventually look up to find you've built a house.

Modern life often leads us to expect instant results, which can make a long term path feel far away. We see people's seemingly overnight successes on social media and feel like we're not keeping up. But a brighter tomorrow is created in those quiet, unglamorous moments when nobody is watching.

When you trust the process, you stop worrying about how far the finish line is and start focusing on the quality of your effort TODAY.

Ultimately, what you do today is a gift to your future self. By putting in the work now, you are clearing obstacles out of your way. It doesn't matter what it is

that you're working toward; today's effort becomes tomorrow's freedom. You don't need to see the whole map to take the next step; you just need to believe that moving forward, no matter how slowly, changes your trajectory for the better.

As always, it's those little things that add up to be big things over time. I can't build a house in a day, but I can easily lay a few bricks.

A Deep Breath for the Spirit

Written February 18, 2026

When the world starts feeling extra crazy, going outside helps. Nature doesn't care about the news cycle or your task list . A tree just grows, and a river just flows. Being around them reminds you that you are a part of a bigger, quieter life happening all around us. It feels like taking a deep breath for your spirit. It's a simple way to unhook that overthinking brain and remember that you are connected to something steady and peaceful.

In nature, you don't have to do anything or be anyone special. You can just walk and use your senses the way they were intended. This quiet time helps the loud thoughts in your head settle down. It's like the earth is reminding you that even when the world feels messy, there is still beauty and a natural rhythm that stays the same. It makes you feel like you belong and helps you stay calm in this stormy world.

The Whole Book, Not the Cover

Written February 19, 2026

Comparison is a normal part of being human, because it allows us to understand our place in this world. But we typically don't compare our whole self to the other person's whole self.

Think of yourself as a whole messy beautiful book, while everyone else is just showing you their front cover. Realizing who you are means stepping away from the scorecard and seeing your own worth as something that can't be measured by a job title or seeming popularity amongst peers. You aren't a collection of stats to be compared; you are a living, breathing person with your own unique path and pace. When you stop looking sideways at others and start looking inward, you see that you're already enough, exactly as you are.

This observation was inspired by a post that a friend made on their time line. If this resonates with you, please know that I see and value the whole person you are; the hard parts, your growth, and your unacknowledged wins, not just the cover of your book. <3

The Cost of a Cynical Heart

Written February 20, 2026

Whenever you feel the urge to judge others, immediately face that impulse and acknowledge your own flaws instead. If you don't, you'll start to become cold and cynical. It's not just the world that reacts to our negative actions; those actions change us from the inside. The real cost of repetitive toxic behavior is that it settles into your character, eventually becoming so normal that you lose the ability to see how much it's actually harming you.

When We Stop Forcing the Outcome

Written February 21, 2026

Finding clarity in life often happens when we stop trying to manipulate things toward our expectations. When we stop demanding that things happen on our schedule and on our terms, we open ourselves up to a much more natural flow.

Most people who practice mindfulness or spiritual connection notice that things tend to fall into place in unexpected, positive ways once they let go of the need for total control. Even during the hardest times, those struggles eventually reveal new strengths and lessons we wouldn't have found otherwise. Eventually, you realize that even the most difficult experiences have a way of working out for the best in ways you couldn't have predicted.

Thanks for letting us kno

Respect Before It's Earned

Written February 22, 2026

When you give respect to someone before they've done a single thing to earn it, you are acknowledging their humanity. It's a way of saying, "I see your spirit, and I know it has value because you exist." Starting from this place of grace means you aren't waiting for them to prove they are good enough for your kindness. Instead, you offer it freely as a reflection of your own inner peace.

Choosing to lead with respect is a practice that keeps your own heart open. If you walk around guarded, waiting for people to earn your decency, you end up living in a world of judgment. But when you treat every person as a brother or sister from the start, you invite a higher energy into the room.

You become a channel of grace, showing that your character is steady and doesn't depend on how others behave.

Even if someone eventually shows they aren't ready for your closeness, you can walk away knowing you stayed true to your path. You didn't let their shadow dim your light; you kept your spirit high by choosing to see the best in them until they showed you otherwise.

Confessions of a Fixer

Written February 23, 2026

I recently got a phone call from someone who was overwhelmed by a situation they couldn't control. Although they initially called for advice, the conversation became more about emotional support. I realized that by focusing on listening rather than jumping to solutions, I could help lower their anxiety, which is necessary before any logical problem-solving can happen.

Listening to someone in distress serves to offer them a steady, strong presence during a difficult time. At the present moment, you can't solve their external problem, but you can ensure they don't have to face it alone. By resisting the 'fix-it' reflex and simply staying present, you give them the mental space to settle. This support helps quiet their panic, eventually leading to a more manageable state of calm. One cannot follow advice while their mind is going in all directions at once.

I initially wanted to jump right in and fix things. That is one of my primary character defects; I was always a 'fixer' throughout my life. Today I see my tendency to 'fix' as a defense mechanism; a way to control my own

anxiey in an attempt to manage the world around me. When I see a situation in chaos, it makes me feel so uncomfortable that I rush to solve it just to stop my own internal stress. Focusing on a solution keeps me busy and safe, allowing me to avoid the vulnerability of just sitting with a difficult emotion.

Ultimately, this shield keeps me at a distance. When I jump to fix things, I'm often managing my own nerves instead of truly being there for the other person. I'm learning that my urge to intervene is usually more about my need to feel in control than it is about their need for help.

I'm still learning, one day at a time.

Closing the Circle of Gratitude

Written February 24, 2026

This morning, as I sat down to write my monthly column for the Mad River Union, my mind kept drifting to the idea of gratitude. It's a word we use often, but in this moment, it has taken on a very specific shape for me: a circle.

Years ago, the Senior Center was a lifeline for my parents. When they were in a place of need, the Center was there for them, providing community, support, and a place where they could belong. It gave them, and our family, a sense of peace during a challenging time.

Today, I find myself at that very same Center, but the roles have shifted. Now I am the one showing up to help, to participate, and to give back. It's a humbling feeling to realize that I am closing that circle.

Being there now isn't just about work; it's a way of saying "thank you" to a place that was there for my parents when it mattered most. Gratitude, I've realized, isn't just a feeling we keep inside. It's something we act on to make sure the door stays open for the next person who needs it.

Debugging My Spiritual Life

Written February 25, 2026

I spent a good deal of my morning fiddling with an old computer, trying to get Linux to run while one error message after another popped up on the screen. It was darn frustrating, but as I sat there troubleshooting, I realized this is exactly how my spiritual life works. I often try to install my own plans or follow my own rules, only to have everything crash or stall out. I used to see those mistakes and screw-ups as total failures, but this morning I realized that they are actually the most important part of the process.

When I finally stopped trying to force it my way and sought some help, everything clicked into place. I didn't just end up with a working computer; I ended up with a much deeper understanding of how the whole system works. My spiritual growth is the same way. I don't learn much when things are easy, but when I mess up and rely upon Spirit to find a way through the problem du jour, I gain a kind of wisdom I couldn't get any other way. Those glitches in my character force me to slow down, look at the right way to live, and try again with more humility.

Now, I feel more fully alive because I'm not afraid of hitting an error. I've learned that getting past a mistake isn't just about fixing a problem; it's about building the experience I need for the future. Just like I'm now slightly better at handling Linux, I'm becoming better at handling life because I've once again been shown that Spirit's direction is always better than the path that Self attempts to chart.

Spirituality by Subtraction

Written February 26, 2026

Becoming spiritually-led changes your perspective so that selflessness happens naturally. Instead of it being a goal you have to work toward, it is an organic result of how you are living. This process is more about subtraction than addition; you aren't trying to add new "good" behaviors to your life, but are instead shedding the heavy layers of the ego that once made self-interest feel necessary.

Normally, the ego is busy trying to protect you or stay in control, but as you grow spiritually, those old selfish urges simply begin to thin out and fade away. You aren't forcing yourself to be a "good person"; you are simply dropping the weight of always putting yourself first. As that ego-driven part of you stops running the show, kindness and service fill the empty space naturally.

Testing a Feeling by Its Fruit

Written February 27, 2026

A lot of our inner struggle doesn't come from some deep-seated flaw, but from simply not understanding how our own minds and hearts work.

To figure out if you should lean into a specific feeling, try to look at the fruit it will bear. Is it selfless? Is it true? Is it morally right? Is it beautiful?

If following that emotion leads to a version of yourself you don't respect, let it go. But if a feeling feels like a spark of genuine, positive inspiration and you ignore it, you'll end up feeling drained and stuck. The more powerful the inspiration, the worse you'll feel if you don't act on it.

When you feel that internal fire start to glow, don't overthink it. Don't make excuses or worry about whether it's practical or logical in the moment. Just protect that energy, stay connected to Spirit, and let it lead you.

I Can't, God Can, Let Him

Written February 28, 2026

Real change starts when we stop faking it. It begins right now in the authentic, honest reality of our lives, including our flaws and fears. We do not have to fix ourselves before we reach out for help; we just need to show up exactly as we are.

When we drop the act and admit we do not have all the answers, we finally make room for a deeper wisdom to step in. This kind of surrender is not about giving up, but about being real enough to finally become teachable. By simply being honest with where we are, we let ourselves be guided into the light and toward a life filled with meaning and purpose.

I can’t. God can. Let Him.

March

Letting Spirit Do the Clearing

Written March 1, 2026

When Ego sneaks in and highlights an old pattern or a mistake, don't rush to "fix" it. Your only job is to step into the light of awareness and let Spirit do the clearing for you.

Living spiritually means being radically honest with yourself the moment you feel out of alignment. If you're stuck in self-mode, you'll get defensive or try to justify your actions with excuses. When you feel that internal nudge that something is off, don't hide. Just acknowledge it. Let God handle the heavy lifting. If you try to argue for your limitations, you're just going to spin your wheels.

How do you know you're actually shifting away from ego-driven living? Life will give you plenty of tests to show you how much you've grown, or what you need to work on. You may find yourself in a situation that used to trigger your resentment or anger, and suddenly, you'll realize you're at peace. When that shift happens, it's undeniable. You'll be constantly amazed at the transformation that has taken place.

We don't forget the past; we use it as benchmarks to measure progress.

The Person Hard Work Makes You

Written March 2, 2026

Stop worrying about what you can't change. Focus on what you can. Let go of the future and trust that life will unfold exactly as it should. Don't let old hurts ruin your spirit; heal them, forgive others, and move on. When you stop judging people, you start seeing the good in them.

Stop living in the past or fearing tomorrow. Be here in the present. Stop complaining or acting like a victim, and take an honest look in the mirror. Remember that love always beats hate and light always wins over darkness.

The best part of hard work isn't the reward. It's the person you become. Stop cheating yourself out of what you could become. The past is gone and tomorrow hasn't happened yet. Prepare for the future, but live your life Just For Today.

Water Dripping on Stone

Written March 3, 2026

Your conception of God is within you in this very moment, indeed in every moment. Don't let fear or doubt get in the way, His love and support for you are limitless. Your success isn't going to happen all at once; it's built through the tiny consistent things you do every single day.

Think of it like water dripping on a rock. It doesn't look like much at first, but that steady persistence eventually wears down even the hardest obstacles. That same consistency will clear your path and put you in a position to help others, too.

So, keep moving forward with confidence. Don't overthink it; just know that your back is covered and you have access to the strength you need.

Amazing things have already started happening, and there is so much more coming; more than you can even imagine. Trust the process and tell yourself 'all is well' through everything. Because it really is.

The Bridge Already Built

Written March 4, 2026

Spirit leads with constant support, reminding us that we are held by a Higher Power and that small, human fears are unnecessary. While faith is the foundation we stand on, trust is the active step we take as we follow that lead.

Imagine a person walking through a beautiful, sunlit forest, but their peace is ruined by the fear of a river they might not be able to cross. All the while, a bridge has already been built. This person has a Guide who has scouted the path and guaranteed that every need will be met. Faith means believing the bridge exists; trust is the act of actually walking across it.

It is time to let go of anxious thoughts and move with Spirit, refusing to get caught up in the problems of tomorrow. When we turn our internal faith into the outward action of trust, we can simply wait for the way to unfold.

A Field, Not a Tightrope

Written March 5, 2026

Real growth starts with how you act every day. When you live according to your own spiritual guidance, you grow more ready to understand deeper truths about life. Think of it like a conversation: as you mature, you can handle more wisdom. Upon each instance of growth, you are enabled to see the world from a wider perspective.

But going higher brings new challenges. Sometimes, you'll feel a push to be 'perfect' in a way that feels stiff and frightening, like walking a tightrope.

That isn't real growth. True progress should feel like stepping onto a wide, open field; it gives you more room to breathe and move freely. You aren't just following rules. You are gaining more freedom.

To see if you've grown, look back at who you were last year. The best sign of progress isn't just avoiding old mistakes, but having new "aha" moments that you didn't have before. These insights show up because your character is finally ready for them. The secret to keeping this going is to use what you learn immediately. When you get a new piece of wisdom, build it into your life right away to stay ready for the next one.

Let Your Conscience Be Your Guide

Written March 6, 2026

Yesterday, someone mentioned having an ‘Angel on their shoulder’, and it caused me to reflect on how I might interpret that oft-used phrase. I often use the expression ‘Let your conscience be your guide’, and that makes much more sense to me.

I’m certain that there is something quietly walking with me. A presence I can't see but can feel. Maybe it's Spirit watching over me. Maybe it's the clearest, most honest part of myself; the part that existed before life got complicated. Either way, it feels real, and it feels good.

This presence acts like a compass. It doesn't get confused by my pride or my fears the way I do. When I'm about to do something I'll regret, it slows me down. When I feel completely empty, it gives me just enough courage to keep going. It doesn't live my life for me, but it quietly reminds me that I am capable and that I matter, even when I've lost sight of that.

Living with this kind of awareness means paying attention. It means getting honest and still enough to actually hear that small quiet voice instead of drowning

it out. It means treating my everyday choices as opportunities to do the next right thing…not perfectly, but sincerely.

I used to think that grace was something that had to be handed to me from above. I've come to believe it often it was already there, waiting beneath all the noise, fear, and bad habits I had piled on top of it.

Whether I call this presence God, a Higher Power, or simply my own conscience at its best, learning to listen to it has changed everything. I spend less time reacting out of fear and more time moving with purpose. And doing that one day at a time seems to be enough.

A Ripple From Hello

Written March 7, 2026

Talking to a stranger is like building a sudden bridge between two lives. For you, it's a way to practice trusting your gut and stepping out of your own bubble. It reminds you that you aren't the only one who has a story, which helps you stay humble and open-hearted. By following that little nudge to speak up, you're basically telling the universe you're ready to be a teammate in making the world feel a bit friendlier and more connected. We needed this during the Covid social disconnection, and we need it today.

For the other person, your random hello might be the exact moment of kindness they were hoping for. You might say something small that feels like a huge answer to a problem they've been chewing on, or you might just make them feel seen during a lonely day. These quick chats act like a ripple in a pond; your positive energy shifts their mood, and they carry that better vibe into their next interaction. It's a simple way to honor the shared humanity in someone else and remind them they aren't walking through life alone.

I Don't Tell God What to Do

Written March 8, 2026

I don't tell God what to do. I've realized that when I try to dictate the "right" outcome, I'm just building a wall between myself and the Universe. My ego wants to manage outcomes, but my soul knows that my limited perspective can't see the whole picture.

I've moved away from using prayer as a way to fix things the way that I think that should be done, or argue my case. That old approach only left me feeling disconnected; without the constant contact that brings me serenity. It made my heart feel heavy, like I was swimming upstream in a fast-moving river.

Now, my only practice is to stay open and aligned. I've stopped handing out instructions and started asking only for Spirit's will to be done. By letting go of my own agenda, I've found a sense of ease that actually sustains me.

I'm no longer trying to force the world to suit my vision, Spirit is changing me to suit His.

The Poisoned Well We All Share

Written March 9, 2026

When we hate someone or something, we think we are hurting them. But our hate doesn't live in the other person. It lives in us. It festers in the working part of our minds, and colors the way we see everything around us. And it doesn't stay contained. Hate leaks out in the way we talk, the way we treat people, the small cruelties we pass along without even noticing.

The well is not just our inner life. It is the shared life we all draw from: the interconnectedness of our families, our communities, our world. When we poison it, everyone drinks from it.

Resentment is hate's quiet cousin, and in many ways it's more dangerous because it hides better. My Twelve Step friends are quite familiar with this. The word itself comes from the Latin re-sentire, meaning "to feel again." Resentment is the false solution of replaying old wounds, of going back to the hurt over and over as if something will finally be resolved by feeling it one more time. It never is. Instead, each replay deepens the groove, makes the bitterness more familiar, and more powerful. We begin to depend upon the story of what was done to

us because it has become part of our identity. The person who wronged us may have moved on entirely, or may even be long gone, while we are still at the well, still poisoning it, still waiting for them to suffer. But others are drinking too. Our children. Our friends.

Strangers who never had anything to do with our old wounds.

The solution is forgiveness. Not the soft, superficial easy kind. True forgiveness means looking clearly at what happened, acknowledging that it was wrong, and then choosing to release your claim on it anyway. Not just for your own sake, but for everyone who shares the well with you. When you carry hate and resentment, they shape how you show up in the world. Forgiveness is not only a personal act. It is a communal one.

Forgiveness begins with honesty. Sit quietly with yourself and simply name what you're holding. See it clearly, without excusing it or avoiding it. When it comes into focus, you also see how far beyond you it reaches. From there, forgiveness is less a single moment and more a repeated responsibility to those around you. Every time the mind reaches back for the old wound, you notice it, and you choose not to go there. Over time,

this is how the water clears. Not through one dramatic act, but through the

quiet, daily resolve to stop adding poison to something everyone depends on. The world has no shortage of poisoned wells. I don't have to contribute my own.

Giving Away the Keys to Happiness

Written March 10, 2026

In Twelve Step programs, we learn that anger can literally kill us if we do not rein it in completely and in time. If we do not master these emotions, they have that power because they lead us straight back to the insanity of addiction. To become free from anger, we first have to realize that our peace of mind is our most valuable possession. When we get angry, we are essentially giving someone else the keys to our happiness and letting them decide how we feel.

We can start to find freedom by seeing anger as a heavy chain that only hurts us as the ones wearing it. Instead of trying to fight these emotions, we try to look at them with curiosity. We ask ourselves what part of us is feeling hurt or scared underneath the heat. When we identify our underlying hurt, the anger often starts to melt away on its own because it is now exposed to reality and no longer has a job to do.

Staying free means practicing a pause between what happens to us and how we react. In that tiny moment of stillness, we can choose to stay calm instead of biting the hook that someone else threw at us. We begin to

understand that the rudeness or mistakes of others are about their own inner struggle and have nothing to do with our worth. By choosing to let go, we are not saying that what happened was okay, but we are deciding that we deserve to be happy more than we need to be right. This shift in focus allows us to realize that we do not have to win every fight to be at peace.

Letting Go of the Steering Wheel

Written March 11, 2026

Trying to force life to go our way only leaves us exhausted and cold toward the people we should be helping. When we try to run the show entirely on our own strength, we inevitably get crushed by the weight of our expectations. We become so overwhelmed by the pressures of work, family, and the world that we lose our internal anchor. In this state of self-will, we start seeing the people around us as obstacles to be managed or problems to be solved rather than human beings to be loved. This hardness of heart is a clear sign that we've disconnected from our spiritual source and the focus has turned inward rather than outward.

To find relief, we have to stop the frantic activity and reconnect with a higher sense of purpose. Real peace doesn't come from fixing every external crisis; it comes from a daily practice of letting go and seeking a quiet, conscious connection with the Divine. When we stop trying to "play God" and instead ask for the strength to be of service, our perspective shifts. We begin to look at even the most difficult people with patience and compassion rather than resentment. By staying

grounded, we move from being overwhelmed by our burdens to becoming an instrument of grace for everyone we encounter.

Just for today, I will let go of the steering wheel and simply be the channel that I was meant to be.

The Season After the Storm

Written March 12, 2026

Spring brings a message of hope.

It's more than just nature waking up after a long winter; it's a reminder that our own dark seasons, our times of struggle, mistakes, or pain, can also pass. No matter how deep the conflict or hardship, we can always emerge into a fresh, vibrant new beginning.

Nature does this effortlessly because it stays in sync with the natural rhythm of life.

In the same way, when we choose to live in harmony with a higher purpose and align ourselves with integrity and the natural order, we can turn chaos into balance and replace discord with peace. A life defined by compassion and unity is the natural result of moving out of the shadows and into the light.

The Story I Told Myself

Written March 13, 2026

Today I had an interaction with someone, and at the end of the interaction, I was asked if I assumed that an outcome was to come to pass. I told the man that I've learned to not assume anything, and just let it go at that.

"I've learned not to assume anything."

And I meant it. It's not something that came naturally; it took time and experience, and a lot of honest self-examination with a mentor to get there. To develop the habit of catching myself before a story hardened into something I'd carry around as fact.

Because that's what the mind does. It doesn't just register events. It instantly explains them. The brain is always filling in gaps, pattern-matching, using past experience and fear and ego to construct a narrative. And it does it so fast and so seamlessly that by the time the story arrives in my consciousness, it already feels like reality. Not interpretation. Not a guess. Just what 'really' happened.

That's the part that used to get me. I wasn't experiencing my assumptions as assumptions. I was

experiencing them as truth.

And once I was convinced of the truth of something, I'd start carrying it. Replaying it. Building a case. The emotional charge would grow, sometimes way out of proportion to whatever actually happened. The other person may have moved on completely, or may not have even known there was a problem…but inside me, the wound would stay fresh. Fed by every replay. Growing with every retelling.

That kind of unresolved anger and hurt is exhausting. It creates a constant inner disturbance; a low hum of agitation and self-pity that colors everything. For a lot of people that's just unpleasant. For me, it was a lit fuse. My whole history had taught me that alcohol was what made that feeling stop. The part of me that knew better got completely drowned out by the noise. So I'd reach for the one thing that had always worked, at least for a little while.

And one drink was never just one drink. It brought the next one. And the one after that. Whatever I'd been feeling in the first place became a distant

memory, replaced by something that cost me far more than the original hurt ever could have.

All of it traceable back to a story I told myself, about something that may never have been quite what I thought it was.

Service Is Where Value Begins

Written March 14, 2026

True greatness starts with service. Think of the Universe as the ultimate partner, always ready to back you up in anything good you do. That higher strength is always there, but it won't force its way in; you have to use your free will to invite it.

Even though this support is a total gift, you still have to step up and sincerely ask for it. Living to help others is the highest path you can take. We're here to be of use to the world, and that's where our real value begins and ends.

A Source That Never Runs Out

Written March 15, 2026

Challenging times are upon us, where we feel pulled in many directions at once.

This isn't a bad thing. You may have values, people, or a sense of purpose that matters to you, but your inner peace is fragile. When life gets hard, you slip back into old habits and unhealthy patterns; things that don't actually help you or move you forward. If you're honest with yourself, you know that self-will alone has never been enough. You have tried to manage life on your own terms, and it hasn't worked.

When things go dark, do you give up on what you believe in? Do you abandon your values, your relationships, your sense of who you are? This darkness is actually part of the process. If you can sit with it, you realize something honest: you weren't really committed to growth. You were just enjoying life when it was easy. And when it got hard, you reached for something (like alcohol) to make the discomfort go away. That is the nature of the problem. It’s not a lack of willpower, but a deep, restless inability to sit with life as it is.

The solution isn't more effort or more control. It is surrender. Not giving up, but letting go of the exhausting idea that you can manage everything yourself. This means becoming open to a Power greater than yourself. One you don't have to fully understand or define. You simply have to be willing. Willingness is the key. Many people who never considered themselves spiritual have found that an honest admission of powerlessness, followed by a simple openness to help beyond themselves, changed everything.

Can you let go of the need to always feel good and just be still, even when it feels empty and pointless? In that stillness, through honest self-examination, making things right with others, and staying connected to something greater than yourself, you begin to find a peace that circumstances cannot shake. You are developing a kind of inner toughness that nothing can break. Then, no matter how chaotic life gets, you stay steady.

Not because you have finally gotten strong enough, but because you have stopped relying on your own strength alone, and started drawing from a Source that never runs out.

Pain as Prison or Purpose

Written March 16, 2026

Everyone has that moment. You stop, look back, and think, "Damn. I've really been through it."

And you have. The hard things were real. I know mine sure were. I caused it. It brought a lot of pain to those who I was closest to, particularly to Miss K.

But here's the question nobody asks. “What are you going to do with it?”

Because there are two roads. The first one feels good immediately. You talk about it, people validate you, and for a little while that feels like enough.

But collecting sympathy isn't the same as healing. And when everything wrong in your life is always someone else's fault, you've handed all your power to people who already hurt you once. That's a bad deal.

The second road asks something of you. Honest self-reflection. Cleaning up your own mess. Staying humble. Doing the work even when nobody is watching.

It's harder. But what's waiting on the other side is actual freedom. The kind that doesn't depend on

anyone else's apology.

And then something shifts. You stop being someone who is defined by what happened to them, and you become someone who reaches back for the person still in the middle of it. Not with all the answers. Just with presence. I know this place. You're not alone. Here's my hand.

Your pain can become your prison, or it can become your purpose. That choice belongs to nobody but you.

Tracing Gratitude Back to Someone

Written March 17, 2026

Gratitude doesn't really exist in a vacuum. When I trace almost any feeling of thankfulness back to its source, I find a person. Someone made a decision, took a moment, or put in effort that landed in my life in a way that mattered. That's what makes gratitude relational at its core. It connects me to someone else, even if they never know it.

Think about the things I felt grateful for today. My hot mug of coffee exists because someone grew the beans, someone shipped them, someone made my coffee maker. A kind word from a friend took intention and care. Even something as simple as a smooth drive into Eureka happened because other drivers were patient and other people maintained the roads. The further I trace it, the more people I find.

This is why gratitude, when practiced honestly, tends to make me more generous. Once I see how much of my day is built on other people's effort, it becomes hard to see myself as self-sufficient. I start to notice how often I

am on the receiving end of something, and that naturally makes me want to give back.

It also changes how I see strangers. The person ahead of me in line, the delivery driver, the cashier. They are all, in small ways, part of what holds my day together. Gratitude trains me to notice that.

That's probably why my journaling practice feels so right. Listing who helped me and who I helped isn't just bookkeeping. It's a way of acknowledging that I am not living my life alone, and that the people around me both known and unknown, are woven into the entirety of this.

Painting the Hull of a Sinking Ship

Written March 18, 2026

Treating a symptom while ignoring the root cause is like trying to fix a sinking ship by painting the hull; it might look better for a moment, but the water is still coming in. IfIn my struggle with alcoholism, I could spend all my energy covering up the shakes or using cologne to hide the smell (the "symptoms") but the illness will continue to destroy my life until I address the spiritual malady at my core. Just as I found that managing external issues wasn't enough without healing that internal disconnection, I see California spending $19 million to "fix" its image as a cosmetic adjustment that ignores the state's own soul-level crisis. A state only earns a genuine recovery when it stops managing its reputation and starts addressing the fundamental misalignment of its values, because just as I cannot market my way out of a spiritual void, a government cannot PR its way out of a reality that has lost its way.

Something Much Older Than the Drink

Written March 19, 2026

I used to believe my drinking problem was one specific thing. One habit, one behavior I needed to get under control. What I discovered was that underneath it was something much older. Unhealed wounds. Fear running the show. A deep disconnection from myself and from other people.

The solution I found was simpler than I expected, and harder. It asked me to be honest about who I was and what I'd done. It asked me to lean on others instead of isolating. It asked me to trust in a Power greater than my own will and my own thinking.

Very slowly, things changed. Not just the behavior on the surface, but the roots underneath. The fear quieted. The chaos in my relationships calmed. I began to feel like I belonged here, in this life, among my community.

I share this because I know I'm not the only one who has felt broken beyond repair. You're not. There is a way through, and you don't have to find it alone. Please reach out if you need help. You are worth it, and the hard things are worth doing.

The Blindness of Certainty

Written March 20, 2026

There's a particular kind of blindness that comes not from ignorance, but from certainty. When we've already decided we know about ourselves, about our patterns, about why we are the way we are, we become unreachable. Not because the truth isn't available, but because we've quietly stopped looking for it. The door is locked from the inside.

And the painful irony is this: the mind will always mistake understanding a thing for being changed by it.

Insight alone changes nothing. What changes us is the daily, unglamorous practice of bringing that insight into contact with real life…with the moments that irritate us, the places where our old instincts still reach for familiar shortcuts, the quiet friction of just showing up differently than we used to. That's where transformation either happens or it doesn't.

Until we've been moved in those ordinary, unwitnessed moments, there's a deep wisdom in speaking less and sitting longer. In letting the truth do its slow work before we try to carry it anywhere. In recognizing that

a depth we haven't yet become is still just a beginning,
however sincere.

The question isn't whether the light
has reached us. It's… “Are we
willing to be changed by it,
quietly?”

Show Me Who I Am

Written March 21, 2026

Today I am free from the chains of alcoholism. Freedom is not a single moment, but a daily practice. Old patterns still whisper at the edges of my life, reaching for my identity, my longings, even the visions I hold for my future. But I know this: without vision, without hope, the soul has nothing to move toward.

So I turn inward. I do the deeper work.

I call on the Divine; that limitless Source of strength within and beyond me, to walk with me toward the one I have spent so long avoiding: myself. My authentic self. The person I was created, at my core, to be. Not the version shaped by pain or numbed by survival, but the whole being underneath it all.

Until I face that truth, I am only ever running, exchanging one cage for another. But the moment I stop running, real freedom begins.

And so I pray. And I listen. Every morning. Every day. Show me who I am. Show me what freedom truly feels like.

Sobriety Was Never My Decision

Written March 22, 2026

My sobriety didn't begin with a decision to stop. It began with God showing up. On one very special day, He made Himself known to me briefly and unmistakably, and in that moment something cracked open. For the first time, I found myself willing to believe that He was real, that He wasn't distant or indifferent, and that He could actually do something in my life.

That willingness was enough. The sobriety that followed wasn't something I produced. It was a gift, plain and simple.

Because here's what I know about myself: my drinking wasn't really about the alcohol. It was about Ego. I was convinced, deep down, that I could run my own life, that if I just thought hard enough or tried hard enough, I could make everything work out. And even when I occasionally put the bottle down through sheer willpower, I quickly realized I hadn't actually changed anything. I was sober, but I was still the same person white-knuckling his way through life. That wasn't freedom, and that sobriety was always very short-lived.

The real issue was that I kept putting myself at the center of everything. My decisions, my plans, my way. And it kept falling apart. What finally shifted things wasn't trying harder. It was letting go. Becoming genuinely willing to have God step in and clear away whatever was standing between me and a different kind of life.

That willingness isn't a one-time thing, though. I have to come back to it every day. Each morning I get quiet and ask God to show me how He'd have me show up; to work through whatever still gets in my way so I can be useful to someone else who's hurting. When I stay in that place spiritually, something remarkable happens: the pull toward drinking simply isn't there. Life gets lighter. Things open up.

The freedom I walk in today isn't something I earned or maintain on my own. It's what naturally happens when I stay connected. It’s what happens when I let my Spirit lead rather than trying to take the wheel myself, one day at a time.

Pain, the Touchstone of Growth

Written March 23, 2026

Problems are one of the ways life, or God, or the universe, depending on your belief, shapes us into who we are meant to become. Just like fire refines gold, difficulty refines the human spirit. When something hard hits you, it is rarely random. There is often something in it meant to wake you up, redirect you, or strip away what was never truly serving you in the first place.

The blessing comes when you look back and see what the problem made possible; the door it closed so another could open, the person it brought into your life, the version of yourself it forced you to become. What felt like loss often turns out to be preparation. What felt like a setback was quietly a setup for something better, or something deeper.

The lesson is the gift hidden inside the pain. It asks you to be honest with yourself, to look at what you may have ignored, what you needed to learn about trust, patience, surrender, or faith. A wise man once wrote that pain is the touchstone of ALL spiritual progress, and there is a profound truth in that. It is rarely

comfort that changes us at the root. It is the ache, the struggle, the problems that cracks us open wide enough for real light to get in. Spiritually, no experience is wasted. Every trial carries a teaching, and when you receive it with an open heart instead of a closed mind, it transforms you rather than eating you from the inside out.

Wisdom is what remains. It is the quiet knowledge you carry forward. The compassion you now have for others who are suffering, the steadiness you feel in new storms because you survived the last one, the faith that grows not from easy times but from hard ones endured with grace. In this way, a problem is never just a problem. In the hands of a willing spirit, it becomes one of the most powerful tools for growth there is.

Training for the Fears We Already Have

Written March 24, 2026

Most of us live in a fog of worry. Money. Relationships. What people think of us. These fears linger because there's no clear way to fight them. They just… sit there.

For the Artemis II crew heading to the Moon? Fear looks completely different.

Their threats are specific. A mechanical failure. A system malfunction. Things they have rehearsed thousands of times. So when something goes wrong 240,000 miles from Earth, they don't freeze. They act. Their training turns panic into a checklist.

They're not braver than you or me. They just have better tools.

And here's what's wild. They actually trade the unpredictable stress of everyday life for the high-stakes pressure of space. Because as terrifying as hurtling back to Earth in a fireball sounds, at least they know exactly how to handle it.

Most of us never get that luxury with our daily fears.

So maybe the real question is: what would it look like to train for the fears you already have?

My Spiritual Doppler Radar

Written March 25, 2026

Okay, my morning task list is complete. Looking at the Doppler radar, it looks like I have time to get in a few laps around the neighborhood before it starts raining again. I use the radar on the NWS website frequently, and find that it is very accurate in terms of timing, because of the real-time nature of it.

I like to think of my spiritual practice as my own personal Doppler radar for my life. Just as I check the screen to see if a rain cell is blowing in before I hit the trail, I use my inner reflection to sense the "atmospheric pressure" of my day. It's an early warning system that picks up on the invisible winds of stress or the dark clouds of a bad mood long before the actual downpour of a conflict hits. By watching these patterns, I'm not caught off guard; I can see a "front" of anxiety moving in and decide to grab a spiritual umbrella of patience or simply wait for the turbulence to pass before I make a big move.

It also helps me spot those beautiful, clear windows of opportunity that I might otherwise miss. Sometimes life feels like nothing but overcast skies, but my spiritual

radar helps me find that one-hour break in the rain where I can step out in peace and get things done. I can't control the weather; I can't stop the storms from coming, but I can stay in sync with the shifts in my heart. Checking my radar keeps me from getting soaked by my own reactions and helps me walk through my life with a much better sense of timing.

Easy Does It

Written March 26, 2026

Easy Does It

Stop fighting. So much of our suffering comes not from our circumstances, but from our relentless effort to control outcomes that aren't ours to control. When a door won't open, the answer is rarely to kick it down.

More often, we need to step back, get quiet, and trust that it will open in its own time.

Progress is not a straight line, and pretending otherwise sets us up to fail. We will stumble. We will have days that feel like setbacks. That is not a reason to quit, it is simply the nature of the journey. The danger is in trying to solve everything at once, because when that inevitably fails, we use it as an excuse to give up entirely. Instead, we take the next spiritually-indicated action. Just today. Just this moment.

Once we have turned our will over to the care of a Higher Power, the work becomes trusting that decision, especially when we feel the urge to take it back. In those moments, we ask for guidance, we accept help from those around us, and we rest in the knowledge that

a Power greater than ourselves can do for us what we could never do alone.

The strength is already there. We find it not by pushing harder, but by letting go.

Peace With What You Have

Written March 27, 2026

Real peace comes from doing what you can with what you have, and letting go of what is beyond your reach. It means taking care of yourself as best you can. Not because life is perfect, but because you are worth caring for regardless of your circumstances.

This looks different for everyone. It might mean doing your best to manage your resources, however limited they may be. It might mean finding a small corner of order and calm in whatever space you occupy, whether that is a house, a room, a shelter, or simply the space within yourself. It means moving your body when you are able. Nourishing yourself with whatever is available. Taking a moment each day to breathe, to be still, to connect with something greater than your circumstances.

When someone tends to themselves with whatever they have, they build an inner foundation that circumstances alone cannot take away. Hard times will always come; financial pressure, uncertainty, watching someone you love struggle. But a person who has done what they could with what they had is more steady when those

moments arrive. They don't fall apart. They stay calm . They are able to be there for others.

Peace is not something only available to those with comfortable lives. It lives inside anyone who chooses, day by day, to do their best with what they have.

Shortcomings That Once Saved You

Written March 28, 2026

The term ‘shortcomings’ is funny because those traits often stick around for a very long time. For many of us, the things we now call "character defects" were actually the survival tools that kept us alive while we were struggling. It’s no wonder we hold onto them so tightly; they feel like old friends who protected us.

If you’re feeling stuck in anger or fear, try to picture a life where those feelings don’t control you. Ask yourself what you’re really afraid of. Are you scared you won't know who you are without those old habits?

Once you name that fear, you can move past it. Use your imagination to see the person you could become; someone peaceful and free. Your Higher Power has a beautiful vision for your life that matches your own deepest dreams. You don't have to be afraid of becoming your best self.

The Architect of Your Own Peace

Written March 29, 2026

“You are the handicap you must face. You are the one who must choose your place.”

- James Allen

We all carry unique burdens. Some are visible to the world and others hidden deep within our hearts. These "handicaps" aren't just physical; they can be heavy emotions, limiting beliefs, or a spirit weighed down by insecurity and illness.

While we didn't choose every challenge or thorn in our side, we must recognize that some of our suffering is self-created through our own attitudes. Spiritual growth begins when we distinguish between the hardships life gave us and the walls we’ve built ourselves.

By choosing to let go of our self-imposed shadows and meeting our unavoidable trials with grace, we claim our divine right to a full, purposeful life. Ultimately, we are the architects of our own peace, called to rise above our limitations and live out our highest, most authentic truth.

The Most Honest Thing I Ever Did

Written March 30, 2026

I remember that day in the fall of 2018 clearly; I finally reached a point where I had to admit that my own willpower wasn't enough to stop drinking. For a long time, I let my pride convince me that I could manage everything on my own, but that self-reliance eventually became a dead end. I had to face the uncomfortable truth that my best thinking had only led me further into a hole. It turned out that admitting I was powerless over the situation wasn't an act of weakness; it was the most honest thing I had ever done. It was the moment I stopped fighting a lonely, losing battle and started looking for a way out that actually worked.

By letting go of the demand to be "the master of my own fate," I found a strange kind of freedom. I realized that my ego had been blocking me from the very help I needed. Once I stopped trying to force my way through life and became willing to listen, I could finally see the path others had taken to find peace. This shift required me to set aside my old ideas and approach life with a new kind of humility, recognizing that I needed a Power greater than myself, found in faith and in the experience

and support of others to restore me to balance.

Today, I see that asking for help is the ultimate act of self-respect. It means I value my life enough to stop sabotaging it with my own stubbornness. By staying open and reachable, I've traded my isolation for a sense of belonging and my chaos for a design for living that actually works. I don't have to have all the answers anymore; I just have to be willing to follow the directions of those who have walked this path before me.

God Speaks in Whispers

Written March 31, 2026

A Higher Power rarely announces itself through crisis or the clamor of the ego. Its presence is more like a quiet, steady signal, one that only becomes audible when we stop drowning it out with our own noise. The whisper of God cannot be heard through the loud voice of ego and self. For those who have spent years driven by fear, resentment, or relentless self-will, this realization often arrives not as a thunderclap but as a subtle shift: a gentle sense of direction emerging precisely when human effort has run out of answers, and when the ego has finally exhausted itself into silence.

Yet sometimes God does arrive as a thunderclap. A close friend, following the advice of his spiritual mentor to continually seek the little miracles hidden in ordinary moments, watched three clouds move together across the sky until they broke into a single crack of thunder. He knew instantly, with the kind of certainty that bypasses argument, that his recently departed mother-in-law was still present and watching over him. God, it turns out, is fluent in more than whispers. He also speaks in signs, and those signs are as varied as the

people who need them. But even signs go unnoticed when the ego is busy narrating, interpreting, and demanding that reality conform to its expectations.

Hearing either whispers or signs requires preparation, and that preparation begins with quieting the self. The mental static created by dishonesty, selfishness, and unresolved guilt acts as interference, not because connection must be earned through perfection, but because ego and self simply crowd it out. They are loud, insistent, and convinced of their own authority. When a person does the honest, humbling work of clearing that wreckage and stepping out from behind the noise of self-will, something surprising happens: what once seemed like an occasional whisper reveals itself as a steady stream. Not commands, but quiet intuitions, gentle nudges toward what is right and useful, gradually replacing the obsessive, fearful thinking that ego once used to dominate every waking moment.

This guidance is sharpest at the margins of the day, precisely because those moments belong least to the ego. A few minutes of morning reflection, shifting the question from What do I want? to How can I be of service?, tunes the receiver. An honest pause in the

evening reinforces it. Over time, this practice builds what might be called spiritual fitness: not a dramatic transformation, but a growing capacity to set the self aside and hear what is actually being offered.

The proof is usually quiet. It shows up as steadiness where there used to be chaos, as clarity where there was confusion, as peace that holds even when circumstances don't cooperate, and sometimes as three clouds gathering in an ordinary afternoon sky. That peace, and those signs, are how we know something greater than ourselves is at work. They were always there. The only thing blocking them was us.

April

Right Here, Right Now

Written April 1, 2026

Right here, right now. There is only this moment. Just this.

And yet many of us spend our days looking backwards, trying to return to something that is already gone. We replay old memories, wishing we could feel that happiness again. Or we replay old hurts, hoping that somehow, if we think about them long enough, they will finally make sense.

But life keeps moving. It never stops. And no matter how hard we try, we cannot go back. The past is closed. Not as a punishment, but as a simple fact of how life works.

You are not who you were then. Nothing is the same as it was. And that is actually good news.

Because here is what you can do: you can take everything you learned from your past and bring it with you into today. Every hard season taught you something. Every broken relationship showed you something about yourself. Every mistake quietly made you wiser. None of that is wasted. It is all still yours.

And if good things happened even in your most difficult times, and they did, then even better things are possible now. You have grown. You are clearer. You are stronger than you know.

Your home is not in the past. It is right here. Right now. In this moment, in this breath, in this ordinary, quiet Friday.

The more fully you show up for today, the better your tomorrows become. Life opens up when we stop looking behind us and start paying attention to what is right in front of us.

I gently close the door on the past. I am grateful for what it taught me. And I turn my full attention to today, because this is where my life is actually happening.

Trading Hope for Familiar Misery

Written April 2, 2026

We often hear phrases like “don’t quit” or “keep going.” When life feels heavy or dark, it is helpful to remember that we aren’t the ones running the whole show, and we certainly don’t have all the answers. We can’t see what’s waiting for us just around the bend.

When a giant obstacle shows up, we have no idea what kind of grace or support might show up right along with it. Our ego wants to be in control, and sometimes it’s actually easier to just give up and accept defeat because at least then we know what to expect. We trade our hope for the comfort of a predictable ending. For years, my choice of embracing ‘familiar misery’ kept me from moving toward the terrifying unknown of change.

Whether we are fighting an old habit, walking away from a toxic connection, or facing a deep fear, we have to remember that life is always in motion.

This exact moment, however painful, cannot stay this way forever. We don't control the final result, but we do get to choose how we show up right now.

Instead of trying to force an outcome, we can choose to

stay steady and pour our heart into what is good. May I have the peace to trust the journey and the strength to simply do my part, leaving the rest to Spirit.

The Readiness to Say I'm Here

Written April 3, 2026

When life calls us toward something meaningful, many of us are too distracted to notice. We're lost in our own plans, our own noise. Being ready means more than having a good heart. It means knowing where you actually are, right now. We spend so much energy focused on where we want to go that we forget to pay attention to where we've been placed.

When the moment comes, the ready person simply says: "I'm here."

The person who shows up fully in this moment is the one who's ready when something real comes along. We hold ourselves back, convinced that our true purpose is waiting just ahead, some bigger, better version of our life. When something grand appears, we're suddenly available. But when the quiet, unglamorous work shows up, we're nowhere to be found.

Real readiness means being just as willing to do the small, invisible thing as the extraordinary one. Whatever is needed, you're there for it. You hear the call the way someone in love hears the voice of the

person they love, immediately, and with your whole self. Life asks us to show up wherever we're needed, in easy circumstances or hard ones, without resistance.

Stay open to the unexpected moments when something greater reaches into your ordinary day. A truly ready person never has to scramble. Think of how much time we lose rushing to catch up to a moment we could have simply been present for all along.

Everything is already alive with meaning. The only question is whether we're paying attention.

Patience as Surrender

Written April 4, 2026

Patience is the ultimate surrender of the self-will, a quiet acknowledgment that we are no longer the directors of our own lives. It represents a fundamental shift from the restless, irritable demand for things to go our way to a state of calm reliance on a power greater than ourselves.

When we stop trying to manage every outcome and manipulate every circumstance, we find that life begins to unfold with a purpose we couldn't have manufactured on our own. This wisdom is found in the realization that our greatest troubles often stem from our own stubborn insistence on a personal timeline.

By letting go of that grip, we find a new freedom and a peace that isn't dependent on our surroundings. The deeper work lies in the ability to walk through delays or difficulties without fear, trusting that as long as we keep our own house in order and stay of service to others, we are exactly where we are meant to be.

Turning Outward From Fear

Written April 5, 2026

Fear turns us inward. It pulls us into ourselves, where worries grow and the mind circles the same dark thoughts until it tells us there is no way out. This is the fruit of self-reliance taken too far: the belief that we alone must manage everything, figure out everything, fix everything. It never works. It has never worked.

We came to see that we needed a Power greater than ourselves.

This was not a defeat. It was the beginning of freedom. When we stopped insisting on running the show, something shifted. We could not think our way there. We could not will our way there. We had to admit that our best thinking had gotten us exactly here, and that was not good enough.

So we moved. We did something. We took the next right action, however small. We made the call we had been putting off. We helped someone without being asked. We got out of our own heads long enough to ask what we could give rather than what we could get.

In that giving, something was restored.

We found that we were not meant to live focused on ourselves. That way led only to fear and confusion. But when we turned outward, when we placed our lives in the care of something greater and gave our attention to others, the weight lifted. Not all at once, but enough for today.

We were not healed by figuring it out. We were healed by giving up that need, and by showing up for one another.

The Wisdom to Let Go

Written April 6, 2026

Going with the flow isn't being lazy or giving up. It isn't sitting around waiting for a miracle while you do nothing. In this way of life, it's called acceptance. It's the realization that there are things we can change and things we absolutely cannot.

Wisdom is knowing when to get to work and when to let go. You put in the effort where it counts, but you stop fighting the things you can't control.

Most of our misery doesn't come from our problems; it comes from our self-will; from trying to force life to go our way. We get hurt when we try to hold onto things that are already moving or fight a reality that has already happened.

Going with the flow means you stop the war with life. You still take the right steps. You still do your part. But you stop trying to force the results. You stop exhausting yourself trying to run the whole show.

You learn to be flexible. When life changes, you change with it. When things start going south, you stay grounded in your spiritual strength. This isn't being

weak; it's being sane. You finally realize that peace doesn't come from getting the world to do what you want. It comes from learning to move with the way things are.

The Gift I Didn't Earn

Written April 7, 2026

My sobriety didn't begin with a decision to stop. It began with God showing up. On one very special day, He made Himself known to me briefly and unmistakably, and in that moment something cracked open. For the first time, I found myself willing to believe that He was real, that He wasn't distant or indifferent, and that He could actually do something in my life.

That willingness was enough. The sobriety that followed wasn't something I produced. It was a gift, plain and simple.

Because here's what I know about myself: my drinking wasn't really about the alcohol. It was about Ego. I was convinced, deep down, that I could run my own life, that if I just thought hard enough or tried hard enough, I could make everything work out. And even when I occasionally put the bottle down through sheer willpower, I quickly realized I hadn't actually changed anything. I was sober, but I was still the same person white-knuckling his way through life. That wasn't freedom, and that sobriety was always very short-lived.

The real issue was that I kept putting myself at the center of everything. My decisions, my plans, my way. And it kept falling apart. What finally shifted things wasn't trying harder. It was letting go. Becoming genuinely willing to have God step in and clear away whatever was standing between me and a different kind of life.

That willingness isn't a one-time thing, though. I have to come back to it every day. Each morning I get quiet and ask God to show me how He'd have me show up; to work through whatever still gets in my way so I can be

useful to someone else who's hurting. When I stay in that place spiritually, something remarkable happens: the pull toward drinking simply isn't there. Life gets lighter. Things open up.

The freedom I walk in today isn't something I earned or maintain on my own. It's what naturally happens when I stay connected. It’s what happens when I let my Spirit lead rather than trying to take the wheel myself, one day at a time.

One Long Thank You

Written April 8, 2026

True gratitude isn't just a feeling. It's something you do. When someone does something kind for you, the best way to repay them isn't necessarily to pay them back directly. It's to turn around and help someone else. Being thankful means quietly recognizing the good things in your life, like the people who supported you or the safety you have now. But gratitude means actually doing something with that recognition.

Think of it this way: the gifts we receive aren't really ours to keep. They're meant to be passed on. When we see gratitude as an action rather than just a feeling, we stop simply feeling lucky and start actively making a difference for others.

Every time we help someone, by showing up, listening, or offering encouragement, we're honoring the people who once did the same for us. This keeps us from becoming too focused on ourselves and keeps us spiritually healthy. Our lives essentially become one long "thank you," and the most meaningful way to express that is to help the person who is now going through what we once went through.

Trickles That Become a River

Written April 9, 2026

Our lives are like rivers flowing through time. When we look back at the big picture, we see how even the small, ordinary days are connected. Every single day helps build our goals, our beliefs, and our relationships.

A river starts as tiny trickles of water that eventually join together to find strength and direction. Sometimes we chase big, intense moments and ignore the quiet ones. We might be used to a life that feels like a roller coaster of non-stop drama. It is exhausting, but it's never "boring." We will have many, many more trickles of water than we will have rushing streams in our lives, yet in the long run we still end up with the same volume of water.

As we grow, we learn that a quiet, steady day is actually a gift. Just showing up by sticking to a healthy routine, staying true to our values, and really being there for the people we love is what creates a meaningful life. Today, I'll try to see the value in the small, simple moments.

Maintaining a Fit Spiritual Condition

Written April 10, 2026

I need to be careful of any project or activity that pulls me away from my spiritual foundation, because that foundation is what keeps me sane. It's easy to get so wrapped up in doing things that I lose sight of the one thing that matters most. My primary purpose, above all else, is to maintain a fit spiritual condition. When I do, life feels lighter. The obsession to drink is removed, and I feel like someone else has my back.

But when I lose that spiritual condition, everything starts to feel crushing. Stress builds up, I burn out, and there's no room left for any kind of peace or quiet in my life. That's dangerous territory for me, because that's exactly the kind of insanity that used to send me straight to a bottle. When I stay rooted in my spiritual condition, though, the pressure lifts. I start to realize I was never meant to control the outcome, I'm just responsible for doing the things that keep me spiritually fit and keeping my side of the street clean.

I wasn't given a second chance at life, pulled back from

the wreckage that alcohol made of things, just to stay constantly busy and run myself ragged. I was given freedom from the insanity of alcoholism so I could be fully present, with other people, with the world around me, and with God as I understand Him. I don't need to drive myself crazy trying to figure out the grand plan or where I'm "supposed" to end up. My job is simply to maintain that fit spiritual condition and trust that a Power greater than myself is handling the big picture.

Right here, right now, wherever I am, I just need to show up spiritually fit. When I do that, everything else takes care of itself.

That's enough.

Building a Storm in Your Head

Written April 11, 2026

When we get caught up in overthinking, we are essentially living in a future that hasn't happened yet. This creates a kind of mental hangover for problems that aren't even real.

This habit of trying to control every possible outcome only leads to more anxiety and fear. It is like we are building a storm in our heads and then getting mad when it starts to rain. We become convinced that if we just think about it long enough, we can fix everything. However, this self-reliance eventually fails us because we cannot think our way into peace of mind.

The solution starts with a simple admission that our own thinking has become unmanageable. Real relief comes when we stop the tug-of-war with our thoughts and surrender the need to be in charge of the results.

By letting go of the demand to control the future and trusting in a Power greater than our own limited perspective, those racing thoughts start to look like nothing more than passing clouds.

When we focus on staying right here in the day we are

actually living, the mental storms naturally clear up. By cleaning up our side of the street and being of service where we can, we are left with a quiet mind and a sense of purpose.

No Checkbook Can Mend a Spirit

Written April 12, 2026

When we survey the chaos and suffering of our world, it becomes clear that money and material resources cannot fix what is truly broken.

Governments and charities often respond to human problems with material aid, and while such efforts are well-intentioned, no checkbook can mend a broken spirit. Throwing resources at a deep-seated problem without addressing its root can make things worse, not better.

The root, in fact, is spiritual. Because the problem is spiritual in nature, the solution must be as well. Real and lasting change does not come from human effort, better systems, or accumulated know-how. It comes from a change of heart. I know this firsthand. For years, alcohol had a hold on me that willpower alone could never break. It was only when I stopped relying on my own strength and began to seek something greater than myself that the obsession lifted. Not gradually, and not through gritting my teeth, but through a shift at the level of belief.

We see this pattern in many people who have hit rock bottom and, in that emptiness, found a power greater than themselves. When that interior shift takes place, it shows in how a person serves others, how they endure hardship, and how they begin to live with a discipline that was never there before. Even those with no religious convictions have observed that without this deeper transformation, people remain subject to their own worst impulses.

The most fundamental question any of us faces is how we stand in relation to our Creator. Once that is settled, a peace takes hold that circumstances cannot disturb. Fear of the future loosens its grip, because we are anchored in something that does not change. That relationship also reshapes how we see everyone around us. Recognizing that every person bears the mark of their Maker, we become less interested in controlling outcomes and more capable of living with openness and grace. We find

ourselves genuinely free to love and forgive, no longer driven by the old, exhausting habits of Self.

The Inlet and the Outlet

Written April 13, 2026

Think of spiritual power like a clear mountain stream filling a pool. For the water to stay clear and full of life, it needs a way to get out just as much as a way to get in. The inlet represents what you take in such as peace, wisdom, or inspiration while the outlet is what you give back to the world through your actions and kindness. If you only focus on taking in and never find a way to share it, the water gets backed up and eventually stops moving altogether.

When that flow stops, the water becomes stagnant. It loses its spark and starts to feel heavy or dull because it isn't being used. To keep your spirit fresh, you have to keep the circle moving. By helping others or being creative, you push the old water out, which naturally pulls new, refreshing energy in from the source. The more you give, the more room you make for a stronger, cleaner current to run through you.

You Can't Carry Someone From a Burning House

Written April 14, 2026

Not everyone we meet is in a good place. Some carry resentment like a weight they can't put down, driven by fear and pain they haven't yet faced. Some have made suffering their identity, and without realizing it, keep finding ways to stay stuck. Others are still in the grip of habits and compulsions that run their lives.

When we're working to stay spiritually fit, a person living in that kind of darkness can pull hard on us. It can feel like they want company down there. But we have a choice. We don't have to go. We can care about someone deeply and still step back. That's not cruelty, that's sanity.

Here's the truth: we cannot do for others what only God and their own willingness can do. We don't help anyone by losing our own footing. You can't carry someone out of a burning building if you're on fire yourself.

Getting pulled into someone else's chaos doesn't light their way, it just leaves two people in the dark.

Protecting our peace isn't selfish. It's necessary. And it's honest. We stay useful to others only when we stay grounded in our own spiritual footing.

Why an Alcoholic Can't Just Stop

Written April 15, 2026

Why can't an alcoholic just stop?

Because alcoholism is a progressive illness that eventually strips away the ability to choose. The mind is under a powerful delusion that it can handle one more drink. The body has developed a physical craving that overrides logic, willpower, and every good intention. And the longer the illness progresses, the deeper that delusion takes hold.

No human effort is enough to remove the obsession permanently.

Not your own strength, not the support of loved ones, not sheer determination. The root of the problem is a total lack of power. That's not a moral failing.

That's the nature of the illness.

So what does work?

Not white-knuckling through temptation. Not relying on grit. Not trying harder than you tried before. The solution is a complete change from the inside out. A

connection to a higher, spiritual power that transforms your internal state entirely.

When you stop fighting the urge to drink and instead focus entirely on improving your spiritual condition, something remarkable happens.

Through prayer, meditation, and service to others, the problem of alcohol is simply removed. It's not managed, not suppressed. You are placed in a position of neutrality where the obsession no longer exists.

You aren't spending your life resisting temptation. You are living beyond it.

That freedom is real. It isn't reserved for a special few. It's available to anyone willing to seek it, one day at a time. ✨

The Luxury of Second-Guessing

Written April 16, 2026

There comes a moment for many people when life simply stops cooperating with their plans. Relationships strain, efforts fall short, and that sense of being in control begins to fade. That moment, as painful as it is, can be the beginning of something better. But it requires one thing first: the willingness to accept that there is a better way forward than the one they have been trying on their own.

A person is ready when they allow a higher Power to take the lead and reveal what true peace feels like. It requires a willingness to stop obsessing over the things they once thought were so important and to let go of the wheel completely.

The real test of surrender is whether they can stop asking, "But what about my plans?" or "What about my problems?" Those questions are signs that they are still trying to control the outcome. The moment they truly hand it over, they stop worrying. They release the need to know how things will turn out. Surrender means giving up the luxury of second-guessing the process.

People often feel drained and empty because they have been trying to carry the whole load on their own power alone. They haven't yet learned how to tap into a greater strength. The only way out of that exhaustion is to stop fighting. When they finally stop struggling and hand it over, they are often amazed at how much lighter life feels. They realize they are being looked after and have been given a whole new way to live. If they aren't feeling that freedom, it is usually because they are still holding onto a piece of the old self or making things far more complicated than necessary.

The good news is that it is never too late to loosen the grip. Every moment is an opportunity to choose differently, to breathe, and to trust that something greater is already at work on their behalf.

The Humility of a Child

Written April 17, 2026

We are naturally driven by self-will, trying to manage and micro-manage every detail of our lives. We treat the unknown as a threat because we think we have to be the directors of our own show. But the path to freedom isn't found in being "mathematical" or calculating; it's found in a complete change of attitude.

Real strength comes from being certain of a Power greater than ourselves while being totally okay with not knowing what's around the corner. While the ego demands a "sure thing," the spiritual life is marked by a relaxed, open trust. To rely on this Power means we no longer have to fear the future or what a single day might bring. Instead of looking at the unknown with anxiety, we can face it with a sense of quiet expectation: we don't know the next step, but we know the One who does.

The moment we stop fighting and abandon our lives to this Power, the world begins to open up in ways we never could have planned. But if we get stuck in rigid "old ideas" or self-righteous opinions, we block ourselves off from the sunlight of the Spirit. If we are just clinging to our own definitions of how things should be, we aren't

actually trusting; we are just worshiping our own intellect.

Living this way requires the humility of a child. A child doesn't worry about how things will work out because they trust they are being looked after.

When we stop playing God and get into a right relationship with the Universe, life becomes spontaneous and purposeful. We can simply let go and let the Power work. It is wonderfully unpredictable how the solution will appear, but as long as we stay open, it always does.

Undefeated So Far

Written April 18, 2026

In a world that feels increasingly chaotic, it is empowering to remember your track record. You have to acknowledge that you have survived 100% of the hurdles life has thrown your way. You are currently undefeated, and your capacity to make it through to tomorrow is much stronger than you think! Even if you do not consider yourself a person of faith, you can find a deep sense of peace by simply trusting the process that has carried you this far.

The secret to staying steady is not about having all the answers or figuring out the whole map. It is about a shift in focus by shrinking your world down to the single step right in front of you. When the future feels too overwhelming or the what-ifs start to pile up, stop and get right in the minute. You do not have to believe in a specific outcome to benefit from letting go of the burden of next week, or even an hour from now.

Your only responsibility is the very next thing that is in front of you to do. Ask yourself what the most honest and helpful task is right now, whether it is a simple chore, breathing, or reaching out to see how you can

help someone else. Often, the quickest way out of our own anxiety is to be of service to another person. Everything after that can wait. By placing your focus entirely on the immediate present, you stop fighting the storm and start walking through it. Do the next right thing with a quiet heart and trust that the path will continue to reveal itself as you go forth. That works for me, and it can work for you as well.

My Father's Quiet Voice

Written April 19, 2026

In a world that equates volume with authority, I've learned that the most profound truths usually arrive in a whisper.

My father was the most soft-spoken man I've ever known. He didn't need to shout to be heard; he chose his words with such intention that you couldn't help but lean in. Because of him, I've learned to tune out the loud voices to listen for the quiet ones.

There is a sacred power in the "still, small voice." When we stop chasing the clamor and the ego of the loudest person in the room, we start to hear the things that actually matter…the nuances, the deliberate wisdom, and the underlying truths that noise tends to bury.

Listening to the quiet isn't just a preference; it's a practice of presence. It's a way of honoring the soul of a person rather than their projection.

I'm grateful for the legacy of a father who taught me that you don't need to be the loudest to have the most to say. 🤍🤍

The Lotus Blooms From Mud

Written April 20, 2026

We tend to cheer for the good times and push away the hard ones, but both are here to teach us something. The good times show you what's possible. They remind you of who you are when things are flowing, when life feels right and easy. Enjoy those moments fully, but hold them loosely. Gripping them too tightly only pulls you out of the very joy you're trying to keep.

The hard times are where you actually grow. Pain has a way of stripping away everything that doesn't matter, leaving only what's real and true in you. You can't learn patience from easy days. You can't build real courage without going through something difficult. The strength and softness you most admire in people almost always came from something they had to survive, not something handed to them.

The lotus blooms from muddy water, not in spite of it, but because of it. Hard seasons work the same way. When it feels like nothing is happening, growth is quietly taking place beneath the surface. You may not be able to see it yet, but something real is being built inside you. Trust what's happening in the dark. Your breakthrough is coming.

When a Volunteer Fell, Others Stood Up

Written April 21, 2026

In life, things don't always go the way we envision them, but they work out according to a higher plan. When we face problems, it isn't up to us to understand the "why" behind every obstacle, even when those obstacles are as frightening as a friend's sudden health crisis. Instead, we are called to trust that God has it under control and simply execute the next indicated step. This faithful perspective was tested at the senior center when a volunteer may have suffered a heart attack and was hospitalized, leaving a sudden gap in the schedule.

Our activities are more than just games; they are vital anchors for the Center, and for those who depend on the social contact and other therapeutic benefits or our programming. Because our other volunteers were willing to be the hands that did the work, the Center maintains its operational resilience. Their flexibility allowed our programs that many people look forward to all week. In the end, their act of service showed that when we let go of worry and take that next right step, we become part of the reason

things work out for the good of the whole community. Their generosity is very appreciated. Your prayers for our hospitalized volunteer is likewise appreciated. <3

Letting Someone Hit Bottom

Written April 22, 2026

When we try to support someone, we have to realize that we aren't the ones in charge of the results. There is a greater power and purpose at work in every life, and sometimes that process requires a person to hit a "rock bottom" or face hard consequences before they can truly change. If we let our own feelings get in the way and try to shield them from those natural results, we are actually playing God. We think we know what's best, but by interfering, we might be cutting off the very experience they need to find a new way of living.

Real helpfulness means getting our own egos out of the way. We have to stop trying to manage or control the situation and instead place our full trust in the Universe. When we stop worrying about how *we* feel about their struggle, we become a much clearer channel for help. We find that our own self-pity and personal problems vanish because we are finally focused on being of service. By staying aligned with that higher path, we can let go of the outcome and trust that the right things will happen in the right time.

The Self-Will Behind My Helping

Written April 23, 2026

The ability to connect with something greater than oneself does not come from personal effort alone. It begins with admitting that everything cannot be managed alone and becoming willing to seek guidance beyond one's own thinking. When attention turns to others, it is not about being in control. It is about learning to trust a wiser direction and taking one's place in it with humility.

One of my biggest barriers to truly helping others is self-will. I can hold onto feelings and ideas that seem right, but are often rooted in my own fear, pride, or need to control. I may find myself wanting someone to change because their behavior makes me uncomfortable, not because it is truly best for them. I may also believe my way is the only right way. These patterns feel natural, but they are the very things I need to let go of.

When I get caught in this, my focus shifts back to me. I become attached to outcomes and frustrated when things do not go the way I think they should. I take things personally and push my own ideas. What I call helping starts to become a way of managing or

controlling. This happens more frequently that I would like.

Real support begins when I let go of that self-centered thinking. I ask for the right thoughts and actions, and I try to follow through with honesty and care. I stop trying to control results and instead offer what I can . I learn to show up with patience, understanding, and a sincere desire to be useful, trusting that I do not have to have all the answers.

And when I remember that I do not have to have all the answers or control the outcome, I can accept things just as they are, and that is okay.

An Honest Start, Right Here

Written April 24, 2026

The path forward isn't found by waiting for life to get easier or for our circumstances to change. We often find ourselves paralyzed by looking at all the things we lack, such as missed opportunities, lost time, or the resources we wish we had. Dwelling on what "should be" only keeps us stuck in the same place.

The solution starts with a simple shift: accepting exactly where we are right now. We stop fighting the world and instead look at the tools we actually possess. You don’t need a massive inheritance of strength or a perfect track record to begin. You only need the willingness to do the next right thing with the small amount of power you have today.

When we stop making excuses about our surroundings and start being of service with what is available, something remarkable happens. The heavy weight of the future disappears, and we find we have enough for just this one day. By focusing on the immediate task in front of us, we discover a source of strength that doesn't depend on our external conditions.

True change doesn't require a perfect environment; it only requires an honest start, right here and right now. If you're feeling stuck or just need someone to listen while you take that first step, please reach out.

Being a Bridge, Not a Recruiter

Written April 25, 2026

People who are truly grounded in their spiritual lives won't try to force their opinions on you or demand that you think exactly like them. Instead, they will encourage you to live by a higher set of principles. The goal isn't to memorize a book or follow a rigid set of rules. It is about connecting with something greater than yourself, whether you call it God, nature, the universe, or simply a force beyond your own understanding.

As we grow, we realize that real freedom isn't about doing whatever we want or winning arguments. It is about having a clear conscience and being useful to others. This means we stop trying to control every outcome and let go of the need to manage other people's lives. We stop judging others simply because they see the world differently than we do.

If we are actually living this way, we won't feel the need to push our views on anyone. Our only job is to be a bridge, helping others find their own connection to something greater. When we interact with people, we stay patient and kind, remembering how much grace and understanding we needed during our own hardest

times.

Being open-minded doesn't mean being a pushover or abandoning what you believe. Stay true to the principles that changed your life, and never apologize for them. Your purpose is to help others find a way out of the darkness, not to recruit them to your way of thinking.

The Bow, the Arrow, and the Aim

Written April 26, 2026

Patience is more than just gritting your teeth and getting through it. It's the deep understanding that our lives are part of a much larger design guided by a Power greater than ourselves. Think of your life like a bow and arrow in the hands of an expert. That Power is aiming at a target you can't see yet. There are times when life pulls you back, stretching and straining you until you feel like you're at your absolute breaking point. You might cry out, "I'm done, I can't handle this anymore!" But that higher guidance doesn't shake. It keeps up the tension until the aim is perfect. Only then does it let you fly toward your purpose.

Even when things feel like they're falling apart, we can choose to believe that the Universe has our back. This kind of trust isn't a flimsy feeling; it's a sturdy decision to stay grounded in the fact that the underlying force of life is good.

When you feel balanced, it's because you've connected to a truth that doesn't change based on your circumstances. Is there something in your life right now that's testing you? Maybe you feel lost or confused about

why things are happening the way they are. In those moments, remember that you aren't the one in charge.

The goal is a total surrender of the Self. There are still parts of our ego, little corners of our character, that we try to hold onto and control. But real freedom comes when we stop fighting and hand the wheel over completely. That's when life stops being a struggle and starts being an adventure. We develop a quiet peace that can face any situation without falling apart. We are being shaped into people who can live with real power, guided by a Spirit that is much bigger than our own limited perspective.

The Movie Playing in My Head

Written April 27, 2026

This internal struggle often stems from what we might call "the disease of self." It's a state of being where our minds are constantly racing, trying to protect us from perceived threats that don't actually exist. When we live this way, we are essentially reacting to a movie playing in our heads rather than the life happening in front of us. This creates a cycle of restlessness and irritability because no matter how much we change our external environment. Whether getting a new job, moving to a new city, or finding a new relationship, we take that same fearful storyteller with us.

The breakthrough happens when we realize that we cannot "think" our way out of a thinking problem. Trying to argue with these fearful stories only gives them more energy. Instead, we have to experience a shift in perspective where we stop relying solely on our own intellect and start trusting in a broader sense of order. This involves a daily practice of pausing when we are agitated and asking for the clarity to see things as they really are, not as our insecurities paint them. By focusing on how we can be of service to others rather

than how the world is failing us, ego begins to shrink, the stories lose their grip, and we find a quiet strength that was there all along.

Acting Your Way Into Right Thinking

Written April 28, 2026

Taking action is the foundation of a new way of living. We must recognize that while a higher power provides the strength to change, it will not do for us what we can do for ourselves. We cannot think our way into right living; we have to act our way into right thinking. This means we are responsible for the discipline and the daily habits that build a solid character. Taking the initiative means stopping the endless search for more information and finally following the path we already see clearly before us.

When we are nudged to do the right thing, we must act immediately. Hesitation is dangerous because it gives our old way of life a chance to take hold again. We need to be decisive: face the person we've avoided, make the amends we owe, and commit so thoroughly that we cannot retreat to our old habits. We can only start this work exactly where we are today. The goal is to practice these principles in all our affairs until they become instinctive. We will know we have found a new level of freedom when, the moment a crisis hits, we instinctively reach for spiritual help rather than our old escapes.

When Instinct Cannot Be Trusted

Written April 29, 2026

Rather than trusting instinct, my experience has shown that my untrained mind is fundamentally unreliable. I know I'm prone to self-deception, craving, and fear-driven perception. What feels like intuition may actually be my ego protecting itself, or old wounds coloring my present reality.

The path to clarity, for me, isn't deeper trust in my immediate feelings, but rather rigorous self-examination, humility, and openness to being wrong.

My resentments and fears are the very things that distort my 'gut feelings'; they are spiritual liabilities to be inventoried and released, not signals to be followed. True discernment comes not from within my isolated self, but through honest reflection, community, and guidance from something greater than myself.

By staying quiet and listening, I move out of the driver's seat and allow a higher direction to take over. This awareness is how I am kept safe and useful. When I find myself feeling uneasy, I try not to force a solution or rationalize the feeling away. Instead, I pause and ask

for clarity. When I trust that inner signal, I am practicing a reliance on a Divine source that sees the truth clearly, even when the world around me looks fine on the surface

No Room for Debate

Written April 30, 2026

Conscience is the inner voice that connects you to your highest sense of right living. When you focus on a Power greater than yourself, this inner voice clarifies the exact path you should take. The real test is whether you choose to follow this guidance. Relying on your own willpower and human instinct is not enough to live up to these standards; self-reliance eventually fails. True strength comes from relying on the spirit of the universe living within you. When you lean on this spiritual source, doing the right thing becomes natural and effortless, freeing you from your old ways of thinking.

This quiet, inner guidance does not shout; it speaks in a still, small voice that is easy to ignore if you are distracted, as this voice speaks in whispers. You keep this awareness sharp by maintaining a daily habit of looking inward and staying open to spiritual direction. If you begin to argue or rationalize what you know is right, you must stop immediately, as there is no room for debate when your inner voice speaks. Allowing even the smallest resentment, dishonesty, or selfish motive to cloud your mind blocks you from your spiritual source. You must let go of these obstacles instantly to keep your spiritual vision clear and stay connected to the truth.

May

Two Rituals, One Healing Journey

Written May 1, 2026

Every morning before the roosters start up behind the house, I practice two simple rituals to connect my body and my mind. I have always taken morning walks for exercise, but after a bad ankle injury in June of 2024, the habit changed. Now, this walk is therapy. It is how I free my body from pain. If I skip it, my ankle gets stiff and I walk with a limp. Moving in the early light removes that tension and gives me the energy to handle my daily work.

Prior to my walk, I ground my spirit through prayer and meditation. This is how I plug into a higher power first thing in the morning. If I miss this spiritual start, my whole day feels messy, I feel stressed out, and my actions might not reflect the path that Spirit suggests that I take.

These two habits are actually part of the same healing journey. Just like my body needs to move to shake off physical trauma, my spirit needs to open up to let go of mental weight. Healing my joints and grounding my soul work together, giving me the strength and focus to take on the day.

No Longer at War With the World

Written May 2, 2026

There's a trap most of us fall into at some point: we get so caught up in our own pain that it becomes the whole story. We replay old hurts, nurse quiet resentments, and convince ourselves that if we just think about our problems hard enough, we'll somehow think our way out of them. But this rarely works. In fact, the more we fixate on what's wrong, the more cut off we feel from other people, from joy, and even from ourselves.

Willpower alone won't fix this. Neither will simply deciding to feel better. Real change requires something deeper: an honest look at what's actually driving our thoughts and behaviors, and a genuine willingness to do things differently.

That shift begins with a pause. Not a distraction, not avoidance, but a real, intentional moment of stillness where we stop insisting that life conform to our expectations. When we loosen our grip on how things "should" be, something surprising happens. We find breathing room. We start to see our problems not as the whole of who we are, but as signals pointing to something deeper that needs attention. That perspective

alone can bring a sense of calm that no amount of mental struggle ever could.

But insight without action is just wishful thinking. Lasting change means putting new values into practice, every day, in small and ordinary ways.

That looks like taking honest responsibility for your own behavior instead of cataloguing everyone else's faults. It looks like extending patience to difficult people. Not because they've earned it, but because resentment costs you more than it costs them. It looks like actively looking for ways to be useful to the people around you.

When you live this way consistently, something changes. Gratitude stops being a platitude and becomes something you actually feel. You stop

fighting everything; circumstances, other people, yourself…and life opens up in ways that are hard to explain but impossible to mistake.

It's just what tends to happen when a person stops being at war with the world.

Keeping It by Giving It Away

Written May 3, 2026

A person finds their truest joy when they step away from their own worries and focus entirely on helping someone else. This act of self-forgetfulness instantly lifts the weight of personal fears and anxieties, offering a reliable path out of emotional darkness. By shifting attention to another person's struggles, an individual becomes a channel for hope and healing, which transforms past pain into a valuable asset. The difficult lessons learned along one's own journey become the exact tools needed to guide another person through their darkest moments.

This way of living creates a powerful paradox where a person can only keep the peace and freedom they have found by freely giving it away. Helping others is not a casual hobby or an occasional good deed; it is the very foundation of spiritual vitality and growth. When someone shares their scars to help heal another person's wounds, a deep bond is forged out of shared struggle. Watching another person's life transform and seeing them find their own footing provides a profound sense of purpose. It proves that a person's own trials were not in vain, but were meant to prepare them to serve. Now…who can I help today?

Feelings Are Not Facts

Written May 4, 2026

People often make poor decisions based on how they feel rather than what they think, treating temporary feelings as accurate facts. A common example of this pattern is a person becoming intensely angry over tiny, stupid things. When internal uneasiness arises, the undisciplined mind naturally reacts with a strong, reactive emotion like anger. Once that anger takes root, it becomes almost impossible to stop brooding without a shift in perspective or a spiritual solution. Many individuals reach this helpless state and default to substance abuse, because drugs or alcohol provide immediate relief, much like scratching a itch on one's back.

Breaking this cycle requires a person to actively avoid quick reactions and anger. This mental discipline must begin the exact moment an individual wakes up. Within minutes of opening their eyes, their mind will scan for emotional discomfort, questioning how and why they feel that way. The brain quickly manufactures an answer that is usually incorrect, restarting the negative cycle. To stop this loop, a person must train the mind by

viewing it as a separate, undisciplined entity that routinely overreacts to small things and amplifies unhappiness.

Because the mind resists discipline, an individual could read a meditation or practice a prayer of surrender first thing in the morning. This mental training is incredibly difficult at first. While people frequently use willpower to force themselves to diet or go to the gym, those physical tasks are easy compared to surrendering one's own mind and automatic reactions. Over time, real change occurs when a person seeks community support and calls a mentor or trusted guide early in the morning to establish an immediate human connection.

The most critical realization in this process is that the individual is not the one orchestrating these internal changes. When a person believes they are solely directing this progress, their ego takes credit, which ultimately derails the recovery. True transformation begins only when an individual

steps away from self-reliance, humbles the ego, and enters a spiritual realm of growth.

A Channel Open at Both Ends

Written May 5, 2026

The paradox of power is that people only get to keep what they are willing to give away. True strength and spiritual vitality are never possessions to be hoarded. They form a continuous current that must flow through an individual to others, or else that energy withers and dies.

When people try to lock away their blessings, insights, or peace out of fear, the spiritual lifeline quickly stagnates. Human beings are not the ultimate source of this power, but merely the channel for it. A channel must remain wide open at both ends to function.

By centering their lives around intense helpfulness to those who are still struggling, individuals renew their own supply. Sharing experience and carrying a message of hope is what keeps a person grounded.

It is through this constant, unselfish outlay of energy that people find themselves protected from their own destructive impulses. They connect to a design for living that grows stronger the more it is shared.

Friction as an Invitation

Written May 6, 2026

When people encounter friction or feel pressured in life, the natural human instinct is to get angry, resist, and force a personal agenda. However, this persistent internal discomfort is often a spiritual wake-up call guiding them to let go.

Instead of fighting life and trying to run the whole show based on self-centered desires, one can choose to pause and recognize that this pressure is an invitation from a Higher Power to yield to a wiser path. True strength and inner peace comes when one stops fighting everyone and everything, quits trying to control outcomes, and quiets their minds to listen for a deeper, divine direction.

By setting aside the ego and the habit of pushing back, one can trust that as they release their self-will, they will be granted the clarity and resilience to live in harmony with life.

Growing Toward the Light

Written May 7, 2026

Look at a wildflower growing in a field. It doesn't try to bloom. It simply grows toward the light and becomes exactly what it was created to be. The stars don't work at shining. They simply are what they are. People were designed the same way, not to perform, but to stay connected to the Source and let that connection do what it naturally does.

Most people make the same mistake when they decide to grow. They focus on themselves, monitor their progress, and put themselves at the center of their own story. That is precisely where things go wrong. The deep human instinct to manage and control everything keeps blocking what the Spirit is trying to do. People get in their own way.

Growth doesn't come from watching oneself grow. It comes from keeping attention on a Higher Power, moment by moment, and humbly admitting the inability to do this alone. That admission of need isn't weakness. It's the doorway.

The people who shape others most deeply usually don't

know they are doing it. They are simply living honestly, connected to something bigger than themselves, with no gap between what they believe and how they live. That kind of life doesn't persuade. It attracts.

There is no need to figure out how to be useful. Getting honest about the need for a power greater than oneself, turning life and will over to the care of that power, and letting go of the results is enough. A person stops trying to be good and starts becoming someone through whom goodness flows naturally, the way light comes through a clear window. The Spirit doesn't need people to be impressive. It just needs them to be available, honest, and connected. The rest, it handles.

Simply be what you were made to be, and trust the Source to work through that.

Taking Off Into the Headwind

Written May 8, 2026

Resentment, dishonesty, and fear are the heaviest weights we carry, completely draining our personal power. When we are full of resentment, we hand our emotional control over to other people and past events.

Dishonesty traps us in a web of cover-ups, cutting us off from reality and making us constantly afraid of being caught. Fear paralyzes us entirely, keeping us stuck in place because we are terrified of what might happen next. As long as these negative habits run the show, we are completely powerless to change our lives.

True spiritual growth begins the exact moment we stop letting these feelings control us. We pull the plug on their power by facing them with radical honesty and looking at our own mistakes instead of blaming others. When we systematically spot our fears, look at who we have hurt, and actively try to clear away that wreckage, these old habits lose their grip on us. We are no longer driven by the desperation to protect our own egos, which clears a space inside us for a higher sense of purpose and peace to take over.

This transformation works just like an airplane taking off. A plane does not launch with the wind at its back; it takes off directly into the wind. The headwind creates massive resistance, but because the plane has a powerful engine driving it forward, that very resistance becomes the force that lifts it into the sky. In the same way, the challenges of facing our resentments, fears, and dishonesty create a heavy emotional headwind. But when we use the spiritual tools available to us to drive forward through that resistance, we do not crash. Instead, the pressure pushes us upward, allowing us to gain spiritual altitude and achieve a level of freedom we could never reach on our own.

We do not need to be perfect. We need only to be honest, and possess the willingness to move forward. Spirit will handle the rest.

Smashing the Illusion of Self-Sufficiency

Written May 9, 2026

Pride is a dangerous trap because it convinces me that I can manage everything on my own, even when my life is falling apart. When selfish and self-seeking thoughts run the show, my ego tells me that asking for help is a sign of weakness. This mindset keeps me isolated and locked in denial, cutting me off from the very help that could restore me to sanity. It creates a false sense of control, making me believe I can conquer my struggles through sheer willpower, even though that method had failed me time and time again. I was stuck in this mental prison for years, convinced that if I couldn't stop drinking on my own, then no power on earth could do it for me.

True recovery could only begin when I smashed this illusion of self-sufficiency. I had to concede to my innermost self that I was without defense against the next drink, and that I could not manage life on my own terms. When my pride had been crushed, I stopped fighting and instead became willing to believe that a Power greater than myself could restore what I had lost.

This shift required rigorous honesty and a fearless willingness to look at the exact nature of my wrongs without reservation or excuse. It meant setting aside my old ideas entirely and trading a self-centered way of living for a new design based on honesty, humility, and service to others.

When I finally asked for help, I broke free from the bondage of self and found a fellowship that understood my pain from the inside out. I discovered that the willingness to be vulnerable is itself a great strength. By carrying my experience to others still suffering and placing their needs alongside my own, I keep self-will in its proper place. This daily practice of humility slowly removes the wreckage of old selfishness and fills it with a deep sense of purpose, so that pride no longer stands between me and the freedom I now enjoy today.

Growing Up at Last

Written May 10, 2026

When we were young, we worried constantly about what others thought of us. This is natural. But many of us found alcohol or were wounded by the drinking of others right at that formative age. Our growing up on the inside came to a halt. We never found that quiet, inner compass that comes from trusting God. Without it, we were tossed about by every opinion and judgment that came our way.

There is a kind of self-neglect that does us deep harm: never learning to trust what God has placed within us. We looked everywhere *outside* ourselves for direction, because we had not yet found God speaking *within* our own conscience and heart.

But in recovery, something wonderful begins to happen. As we grow in honesty, face ourselves with courage, and seek through prayer and meditation to know God's will, we begin to grow up at last. The emotional and spiritual growth that was arrested by our illness quietly resumes.

We learn, perhaps for the first time, that our feelings matter. That God speaks to us *through* our

conscience, our convictions, and our God-given interests. We come to rely on God rather than on the approval of others. We ask simply: *What does God want for me? What is His will?*

This daily practice of honest reflection, prayer, and meditation builds in us what the world could never give; a genuine relationship with ourselves and with the God of our understanding. We are no longer ruled by fear of what others think. We are guided, one day at a time, by a Power greater than ourselves.

Just for today, I will seek God's will in my own heart, trust what He has placed within me, and live according to His guidance rather than the opinions of others.

The Purpose of a Lonely Path

Written May 11, 2026

When a person finds themselves walking a lonely path, it is not a sign of abandonment, but an invitation to step away from the noise and connect deeply with a Higher Power. This isolation is a purposeful design, meant to clear away distractions so an individual can achieve a profound, internal oneness with the source of all life.

To experience this alignment, a person must ask themselves if they are willing to cooperate with this spiritual awakening, or if they are still stubbornly trying to run the show on their own self-will. Spiritual growth requires surrendering the illusion of total independence and letting go of the demand that the universe bend to personal desires.

The universe does not exist to fulfill ego-driven plans, nor does it consult anyone before introducing difficulties, losses, or trials. These painful experiences are allowed into a person's life to serve a higher evolutionary purpose, acting as a crucial turning point.

If someone faces life's hardships with defiance, an insistence on having their own way, and a reliance on

self-knowledge, they will inevitably spiral into resentment, fear, and cynical fault-finding. However, if they meet these challenges with a spirit of complete surrender, daily affirming a desire for a Power greater than themselves to direct their life, these same difficulties will transform them into a kinder, more noble, and more useful person.

Consolation and peace come from this absolute trust, knowing that a loving, universal Wisdom is operating through one's life, which completely insulates a person from bitterness. Individuals are being guided toward an unbreakable spiritual connection, and the universe will keep nudging them until they fully let go and allow that transformation to happen.

A Bird Doesn't Ask the Wind Its Meaning

Written May 12, 2026

A bird doesn't ask the meaning of the wind. It simply learns how to fly through it. 

Most of us don't begin searching for something greater until the life we built on our own terms has crumbled. When things were going our way, we needed nothing beyond ourselves. But when the storm arrived, and for many of us it arrived with a violence we never anticipated, we discovered that self-will alone could not see us through.

Suffering has a way of doing what comfort never could. It shows us, with brutal honesty, that we are not the architects of the wind. We can exhaust ourselves fighting it, bargaining with it, demanding it answer for itself. Or we can surrender, not in defeat, but in the deepest act of courage most of us will ever know.

That surrender asks something specific of us. It asks us to admit we were wrong about our own power. To set aside the illusion that we were running the show. To become open, honest, and willing, and in that

willingness, to find a foundation that no storm can touch.

Real growth doesn't begin when everything goes right. It begins the moment we stop trying to master the wind, and instead place our trust in something that was carrying us all along.

The Part the World Cannot Warp

Written May 13, 2026

There is a part of you the world cannot warp.

Your thinking mind can be twisted by fear, by pain, by years of just trying to survive. But your original spirit, your conscience, sits beneath all of that, untouched. It was there before the armor went up. It's still there now.

For a long time, many of us relied on willpower and grit just to get through the day. We hid from our feelings and treated life as something to be endured rather than lived. Those defenses kept us alive during dark times, and there's no shame in that. But staying locked inside them meant missing the life that was waiting on the other side.

When we stop relying solely on ourselves and trust something greater, everything shifts. We no longer need to hide, numb out, or white-knuckle our way through. Safety stops being about control and starts being about trust.

That quiet, unwarped part of you, your conscience, your original spirit, already knows the way. The work is learning to listen to it.

That freedom isn't waiting somewhere in the future. It's available today.

The Freedom From Seeking Approval

Written May 14, 2026

Many people hear the advice that to receive more love and respect, they must work harder to earn it. However, trying to change to please the world is an exhausting trap that never actually works. The real secret to peace is not about fixing how others see a person, but about changing how that person sees themselves.

No one has to fight or alter who they are to force people to appreciate them. True peace comes from looking inward and cleaning up one's own side of the street, rather than trying to control how other people think or act.

When individuals stop demanding that the world treat them a certain way, they free themselves from resentment.

By focusing on honesty, humility, and being of service to those around them, their perspective naturally changes. They begin to find a quiet strength that does not rely on the applause or approval of others. Living this way

means facing life on its own terms with a calm and steady mind.

It requires relying on a deeper, spiritual source of strength rather than stubborn willpower. As people practice being honest with themselves and letting go of old grudges, the need for outside validation simply slips away. They start to treat others with kindness because it is the right thing to do, not because they are trying to buy affection. Ultimately, they discover that they are already grounded, whole, and perfectly taken care of, just as they are.

The Peace of Keeping Your Word

Written May 15, 2026

Keeping your promises brings a deep sense of freedom and peace. When you do what you say you will do, your mind stays calm. You no longer feel the heavy weight of guilt or worry. Instead, you get to live with a clean heart and a clear conscience. This builds a strong, quiet trust in yourself that helps you feel safe and confident.

Being dependable also changes how you feel about yourself. When you are reliable, your relationships get much better and stronger. People know they can trust you, which brings you closer to family and friends. You stop worrying about what others think because you know you are doing the right thing. The biggest reward is a peaceful mind and a good night's sleep.

Following through on your word gives your life a true purpose. You become a safe and helpful person for others to be around. This simple honesty brings a deep, steady happiness that nothing can take away from you. You feel truly free, happy, and content inside.

The Storm Is the Road

Written May 16, 2026

Every problem carries a lesson inside it. Most of us miss it because we are too busy trying to make the problem stop. But when we slow down enough to ask what it is teaching us, something changes. The problem does not disappear, but our relationship to it does. We begin to see it not as something happening *to* us, but as something happening *for* us.

When we take that lesson and carry it forward into how we live, how we treat others, and how we face the next hard thing, it stops being a problem. It becomes a blessing. Not in spite of the pain it caused, but because of what that pain produced in us.

Our past does not have to be a prison. Worked through with humility rather than buried in shame, it becomes our greatest asset. The darkness we have walked through is precisely what equips us to sit beside someone else who is stumbling in theirs. We cannot give away what we do not have, and we cannot have it until we have lived it and carried it forward.

That word, surrender, is so often misunderstood. It is

not weakness. It is not giving up. It is the action of releasing our grip on outcomes we were never meant to control. It is accepting that there is a design underneath the disorder, even when we cannot see it. Especially when we cannot see it.

If you are carrying something heavy today, you do not have to carry it perfectly. You do not have to have the lesson figured out yet. The only requirement is willingness, a cracked-open willingness to let the experience mean something, to let it build something in you that tomorrow will need.

The storm is not a detour. It is the road. The lesson is not the end. It is the beginning. And when you carry it forward, what once broke you becomes the very thing that sets someone else free. 🙏

Volunteering as Medicine for the Soul

Written May 17, 2026

Volunteering changes people from the inside out. When they turn their focus away from their own worries and place it onto the needs of others, the ego begins to quiet down, and that natural quieting reduces the internal anxiety and pride that so often drive their pain.

Selfless service is also powerful medicine for the soul. It breaks the isolation that comes from living a self-centered life, and by reaching out to help someone else, a person taps into a higher power and a deeper purpose that simply cannot be found when they are only looking out for themselves.

Helping others also creates a real sense of connection that heals feelings of loneliness and uselessness. When someone shares another person's burdens without looking for praise or reward, they learn humility and build a bridge of mutual respect.

Through that kind of action, a quiet strength begins to grow inside them. Old, negative habits are replaced with a fresh sense of belonging and joy, not because

they sought those things for themselves, but because they stopped seeking and started giving.

The greatest discovery in all of this is simple but profound. A person cannot keep the peace and contentment they have found unless they are willing to give it away to someone else.

Leaping Before It Makes Sense

Written May 18, 2026

When your inner voice tells you to change, do not hesitate. Backing away from difficult choices creates a bad habit that will quickly take over your life and stall your personal growth. You cannot expect your deeper intuition to always make logical sense to your brain, and waiting for a guarantee of safety is just your ego trying to stay in control.

The way to real progress requires you to stop overthinking, drop your need to manage everything, and take a bold leap into the unknown. While letting go feels risky and completely crazy to your intellect, it is actually the only way to find real peace and sanity. The next time fear paralyzes you during a crisis, surrender your worries, trust the process, and dive in.

Money Has a Ceiling

Written May 19, 2026

Think of someone who walked through something devastating, a diagnosis, a loss, a life rebuilt from nothing, and came out the other side somehow more themselves than before. What carried them?

Money helps. Let's be honest about that. Resources, security, and access to good care are real advantages, and pretending otherwise does a disservice to people who struggle precisely because they lack them. But money has a ceiling. Plenty of people with every material advantage still feel hollow, anxious, and lost. And plenty of people with almost nothing carry a kind of peace that others can't explain or buy.

That gap is where the inner life lives.

When we stop long enough to find that place, through prayer, reflection, time in nature, honest self-examination, something changes. We stop asking *what do I have?* and start asking *who am I, and what do I actually care about?* That question, sincerely asked, tends to change everything else.

It changes how we see each other too. People who have

done real inner work tend to be less brittle. They can sit across from someone with a completely different worldview and still find something they recognize, because they've already met it in themselves.

You don't have to call it God or spirit or anything at all. You just have to stop long enough to notice it's there.

Spiritual Checklists for Other People

Written May 20, 2026

We often think we know exactly how to fix another person. We rush in with our spiritual checklists and tell them, “If you just meditate more, read the right books, and pray, you will get over this.”

When we do this, we are actually acting out of our own anxiety, not true spiritual guidance. It is much easier to force a solution than to get out of the way and trust a Higher Power.

We would rather stay busy managing everyone else's lives than face our own lack of faith. We run around trying to play God, trying to control things we were never meant to handle. If we truly trust our Higher Power, we know that this Power will do for others what they cannot do for themselves.

We only lose hope for others when we forget the miracles that have happened in our own lives. Once we truly recognize how we were saved from our own rock bottom, we stop despairing about anyone else. But if we haven't done our our own housecleaning, we will panic. Our

urge to control others is a direct reflection of our own lack of spiritual experience.

Before we can help anyone, we have to look in the mirror. We must see our own flaws and the chaos we created when we relied entirely on our own willpower. When we finally get an honest look at our own egos and our capacity for self-delusion, we realize we are no better than anyone else. We see that without spiritual help, we are just as broken as the next person.

True spiritual awakening means giving up the illusion of control. When we stop trying to run the show, we can finally become a channel for a Higher Power to do its work.

When God Closes a Door

Written May 21, 2026

When things don't go my way, I can choose to stop fighting and trust God's plan instead. It helps to remember that I cannot see the future, and my own human strength is not enough to keep me safe. If a plan fails, a door closes, or a relationship ends, it is often God protecting me from a dangerous path.

True peace comes when I let go of control and stop getting angry about life's detours. When I work through the emotional pain of not getting my way, this spiritual healing changes how I see the world. Walking through this pain with a higher power builds a deep understanding of myself and others.

As my understanding grows, I become much more effective in my daily life. I no longer waste energy on useless fights or resentment. Instead, I gain the clear sight and strength needed to truly help the people around me.

Every setback is just a way to build my character, make me more useful to others, and get me ready for a safer, better future.

From Asking to Listening

Written May 22, 2026

Most of us begin our relationship with whatever we call God, or the universe, or life itself, by asking for things. Fix this. Remove that. Make this situation go away. It is an understandable starting point, born of fear and the exhausting effort of trying to manage everything alone. That's how I began.

But something changes in people who stay with the practice. The asking gradually gives way to listening. The frantic negotiating softens into a quieter kind of attention. Instead of arriving with a list of demands, they arrive with a question: *what is actually being asked of me here?*

This is where the real transformation begins. Not in answered prayers, but in a growing trust that something larger than personal willpower is at work. The person who once white-knuckled their way through every decision begins to notice that when they get quiet enough, a kind of inner knowing becomes available, one that feels less like opinion and more like direction.

Small things confirm it. A conversation that arrives at

exactly the right moment. A sudden clarity after days of confusion. The sense, looking back, that certain detours were not detours at all. Life begins to feel less like a problem to be solved and more like something being gently guided.

The ego doesn't disappear. But it loosens its grip. And in that loosening, something that might be called joy, steady, unearned, not dependent on circumstances, begins to take up more space.

This is available to anyone willing to get quiet enough to notice it.

A Position of Neutrality

Written May 23, 2026

True mental freedom comes from realizing that we cannot control the people, places, or things around us, but we can change how we respond to them. When we stop trying to run the whole show, we no longer need to strike back out of anger or twist ourselves into knots trying to please others.

Instead, we learn to pause when agitated or doubtful, asking a Higher Power for the right thought or action. This allows us to witness our passing thoughts and fears without letting them drive our behavior. By surrendering our demands for revenge and external validation, we are relieved of the burden of self-will and placed in a position of neutrality, finding a deep, quiet peace that anchors us through any storm.

The Boring Routine Is the Real Test

Written May 24, 2026

When people let fear run their minds, they get trapped in worry. They try to force everything and everyone to go their way. Peace begins when they stop fighting, let go of control, and trust a Power greater than themselves. This trust changes how they live. Instead of hiding in fear, they face life with new courage because they know they are not alone.

The hardest test of this new life is not a big emergency. It is the boring, normal, everyday routine. It is easy to ask for help when things are going south, but the real victory is staying calm and kind during a dull average day. People often expect huge, flashy changes when they start living in this fashion. Instead, they find that real happiness is much simpler. It comes from helping others right where they are and learning to face everyday life with a peaceful heart.

This Dirt Is in My DNA

Written May 25, 2026

This dirt is in my DNA. I was born in Eureka General Hospital, raised on these streets, and when my time comes, my ashes will be scattered in our Community Forest. Staying here is not because I lack options. It is a conscious choice to protect the future of the community that shaped me.

Because I know every corner of this town, I feel a deep responsibility to be a caretaker. My goal is to use my lifelong knowledge to make this place better for everyone. I do a lot of things, from board and committees, to work boots and gloves.

I do this freely, with a sense of paying forward a debt of gratitude. Others did this for me. Now it is my turn.

Staying in one place for life does bring challenges, like breaking out of old childhood labels and avoiding narrow thinking. However, I fight that stagnation by constantly learning and bringing fresh ideas back to my neighbors. Change is inevitable. How we take action to guide change charts this course.

Loving a town forever means seeing its flaws clearly and

doing the hard work to fix them. I am not just living here; I am actively investing my life into our local businesses, organizations, and governing bodies. I want to leave this town much better than I found it, ensuring it remains a wonderful place for the next generation to enjoy.

So far, so good.

Witnessing Thoughts Without Acting

Written May 26, 2026

I've found that emotional freedom comes from realizing that we cannot control the people, places, or things around us, but that we can change how we respond to them. When we stop trying to control every outcome, we no longer need to strike back out of anger or contort ourselves to satisfy others.

The practice that makes this possible is simple: we learn to pause when agitated or doubtful, asking a Higher Power for the right thought or action, instead of falling back on a self-based reaction. This allows us to witness our passing thoughts and fears without letting them drive our behavior.

By surrendering our demands for revenge and external validation, we are relieved of the burden of self-will and we find ourselves on neutral ground, settling into a deep, quiet peace that anchors us in any storm.

Nobody Wakes Up Wanting Recovery

Written May 27, 2026

Nobody wakes up and says, "I need recovery." That word feels like it belongs to someone else, someone whose problem is more visible, more severe, more obvious than yours.

But what if the thing you're carrying isn't something like alcoholism or drug abuse? What if it's anxiety that won't let you rest, or anger that keeps costing you relationships, or shame so old you've stopped questioning whether it's even true?

We all have something. A hurt we haven't named. A habit we can't break. A hang-up that keeps us stuck in the same place year after year.

That's not weakness. That's being human.

And here's what many have discovered: somewhere beneath the noise, beneath the defense mechanisms and the stories we tell ourselves, there is a still, small voice that has always known the truth. It never lies to you. It doesn't shout. It doesn't manipulate. It simply tells you what's real, if you're willing to get still enough

to hear it.

That voice is the beginning of healing. Not willpower. Not having the right answers. Just the courage to get honest with the truest part of yourself.

We don't have to have it all together. We just have to be willing to start.

Holding Circumstances Differently

Written May 28, 2026

Every day, you face a real choice. Not between problems and possibilities, but between circling in what's wrong and staying open to what's still possible. That's a harder distinction, and an honest one.

Peace doesn't come from getting your circumstances right. Most people discover that the hard way, like the way I did. It comes from slowly, imperfectly learning to hold your circumstances differently. Gratitude, faith, and a stubborn willingness to find joy aren't feelings that just show up.

They're habits you build, especially when you don't feel like it.

That's not a morning-affirmation thought. It's actually difficult. The people who've walked this will tell you it took suffering to learn it, not inspiration. Pain is a powerful and profound teacher.

So take a breath. Not as a ritual, but as a reminder that you're still here, still capable of choosing your next move. That's enough to start with.

The Trap of Our Own Certainty

Written May 29, 2026

It is so easy to fall into the trap of our own certainty. We get so caught up in our own lives, achievements, and unique worldview that we unconsciously start judging anyone who doesn't see things the same way. This is where intellectual arrogance and cognitive bias creep in. We start treating our specific life experience as the absolute blueprint for how everyone else should live, completely forgetting that real maturity is rooted in humility, open-mindedness, and empathy.

Your perspective is just one tiny piece of a massive, diverse, and complex puzzle. Real growth isn't about always being right or staying trapped inside an echo chamber. It is about dropping our personal defenses to practice genuine curiosity. Another person's lived experience, daily struggles, or view of the world is just as valid and real as yours, even if it looks completely different from your own history. When we stop dismissing or judging opinions that differ from ours, we break through our deepest blind spots and open the door to real, human connection.

When the Performance Finally Cracks

Written May 30, 2026

Most of us don't look for deeper help until we've exhausted every other option. We try harder, think smarter, white-knuckle our way through and still find ourselves hollow. That restlessness isn't a flaw. It's a signal.

There's a moment some people hit where the performance finally cracks. The self-sufficient version of yourself, the one who had it handled, turns out to be a fiction. And strangely, that collapse is the doorway.

Surrender isn't weakness. It's the first honest thing some of us have done in years. When we stop managing and start asking, something changes.

Not because we willed it, but because we finally got out of the way.

The sun rises on everyone. Basic existence is available to all. But there's a difference between existing and being genuinely alive to something larger than yourself. That aliveness seems to come only when we stop pretending we don't need it.

If your life has stopped making sense, that might not be a crisis. It might be an opening.

You don't have to have it together to ask for help. You just have to be empty enough to mean it.

Coming Like a Beggar, Not a Wish List

Written May 31, 2026

Most of us don't ask for help until we're completely out of options. We keep chasing something that feels missing, trying everything we can think of, and none of it works. That's actually the beginning of something good. When our best efforts finally fail us, we're forced to admit we can't fix ourselves.

And that admission, as hard as it is, opens a door. For the first time, we find ourselves considering that there just might be a Power greater than ourselves that could do for us what we could never do on our own.

When we stop trying to run everything on our own, life changes. We move from just going through the motions to actually connecting with a Higher Power, and suddenly even the small things start to matter in a way they never did before.

Getting there means letting go of the idea that we have it all figured out. A lot of us would rather go numb than admit how empty we feel inside. But that emptiness isn't something to be ashamed of. It's actually pointing

us somewhere.

We don't come to a Higher Power with a wish list. We come the way a beggar comes, with nothing, and nothing to prove. There's no embarrassment in that. A hungry person doesn't apologize for needing food. When we finally admit how desperate we really are, that's when we become ready to receive something we never could have given ourselves.

June

From Performance to Overflow

Written June 1, 2026

For a long time, my helpfulness was a loud performance.

I used service to balance an internal ledger, trying to prove to the world and to myself that I was important, valuable, and good. On the outside, I was doing the right things. On the inside, I was running on fumes, fueled by fear and a desperate need for validation.

Today, things look exactly the same from the outside. I am still doing the work, still showing up, still helping where I can. But on the inside, everything has changed.

Something in the motive quietly changed. I no longer serve to pay back a debt of guilt. I serve because my own cup has been filled, and helping is simply the natural overflow of that gratitude.

I don't need the applause anymore. I don't need the action to define my worth or fix my past. The ego has stepped aside, and what's left is just a quiet, steady calling to be of service.

Same actions. Entirely different spirit.

To anyone still trapped in the exhausting cycle of trying

to outrun their past: healing is possible. **You don't have to earn your right to exist.** True freedom comes when you stop performing and start pouring out the love you've been given.

Can't Reason Someone Out of a Feeling

Written June 2, 2026

What's on my mind this morning was an interaction with a community member who is ignorant of how things are accomplished in the realm of local government. It's frustrating, but there are tools that I can use to at least maintain my serenity and peace of mind.

Dealing with people who don't understand how government works, yet want to force their personal feelings onto everyone else, is absolutely exhausting. I've learned that the most important thing to remember is that I cannot reason someone out of a position they didn't reason themselves into. They aren't looking for a civics lesson or a factual debate; they are just looking for an outlet for their anger and an audience to react to them. Trying to explain facts or laws to someone driven entirely by raw emotion only drains my energy and leaves me frustrated.

The best way I've found to protect my peace is to stop engaging in the argument completely. I do not carry the burden of correcting their ignorance, and I don't owe

anyone a debate.

I always remind myself that a stable society runs on actual laws, not the loudest feelings in the room. I refuse to let their chaotic energy disrupt my day or dictate my mood. I save my valuable time and mental focus for meaningful, respectful conversations with open-minded people. I just let the emotionally charged individuals exhaust themselves while I step back, stay calm, and protect my own mental well-being.

An Open Journal, Typed Out Loud

Written June 3, 2026

Every morning after I meditate, I spend time reading, reflecting on life, and seeing how I may incorporate these reflections into today. During these quiet moments, I often get a fresh perspective, a spark of inspiration, or a deeper understanding of things.

Part of my daily spiritual practice is keeping no secrets, and sharing these reflections openly keeps me from hiding behind a carefully managed version of myself. Think of this as an open journal, where I type out loud what I am learning in hopes that it might be useful to someone else.

My hope is that by being completely transparent, these daily insights might offer a moment of peace, encouragement, or inspiration to anyone who happens to need it.

The Universe Doesn't Negotiate

Written June 4, 2026

Something gets in the way of a deeper life, and most of the time it's us. Not our circumstances, not other people. Our preferences, our comforts, the quiet deals we make with ourselves about how much we're willing to change. We offer up the easy parts and hold the rest back, and then wonder why nothing changes.

Here's what I've come to believe: the Universe doesn't negotiate. It isn't interested in the version of you that's been curated for comfort. It asks for all of it, including the parts you'd rather keep hidden, even from yourself.

The hardest thing I've ever done is let go of the illusion that I'm running my own life. Not because I gave up, but because I finally saw that my grip on control was the very thing holding me back. When I loosened that grip, something opened up. Life started feeling less like a problem to manage and more like something I was actually part of.

That shift doesn't come with a rigid set of rules. It comes as a quieter kind of listening, an inner voice that, when you pay attention to it, keeps pointing you toward the

next indicated action. The challenges don't disappear. But they stop feeling like obstacles and start feeling more natural, as if it were the path itself.

One thing I've had to watch for: the temptation to turn my own breakthroughs into instructions for everyone else. What cracked something open in me may not be what someone else needs. We each find our way in our own time.

What I can say is this: when you stop fighting what's in front of you and start trusting it, something in you relaxes. And that relaxation, that quiet willingness, has a way of reaching other people without you even trying.

That's the invitation. Not a demand, just a question worth pondering: What would change if you stopped trying to control the outcome?

Sitting With Reality Instead of Arguing

Written June 5, 2026

It’s easy to look at the world right now and feel like something has gone fundamentally wrong. The conflicts, the shouting, the sides drawn so hard and fast that nuance has no room to breathe. It can feel like humanity is failing some basic test.

But here’s what I keep coming back to: none of us are all the way good, and none of us are all the way bad. Every person carrying a sign, posting an angry comment, or digging into a position they won't budge from is also someone who has loved another person, felt afraid, and wanted things to be better. That doesn't excuse the harm people cause. It just means the picture is never as simple as the loudest voices want it to be.

The trap I fall into, and I suspect I'm not alone, is believing that if I just judge hard enough, analyze clearly enough, or find the right people to blame, something will change. It never does. What changes, at least for me, is when I stop auditing everyone else and get honest about my own part in the noise. That's not passivity. It's a

better place to put my attention.

Compassion isn't agreement. Tolerance isn't surrender. They are simply the decision to sit with reality where it is, rather than to argue with it. And from that steadier place, something closer to actual peace becomes possible. Not out there in the world first, but within myself.

The Practice of Being Unbothered

Written June 6, 2026

People who know me say I seem calm even when things go sideways. This is why.

It begins with a single, uncomfortable truth: most of my suffering is self-inflicted. I spend enormous energy demanding that people, places, and situations bend to my will, and they rarely do.

The moment I find myself upset, something in me has declared the world unacceptable. That declaration is unsustainable. It puts me in constant conflict with reality, which, as it turns out, does not negotiate.

Letting go of that fight is not weakness. It is the most practical thing I can do. When I stop insisting that everything conform to my specifications, something changes. Not out there, but in here. I become, almost without trying, harder to rattle.

This is what it means to be unbothered. It is not indifference. It is not detachment from life. It is the freedom that comes from focusing on the one thing I can actually control: my own attitudes and actions. Everything else is above my pay grade.

The goal was never perfection, because that is impossible. It was progress; slow, uneven, real. And the reward is not a life without difficulty. It is a life where difficulty no longer has the final word.

Some days I still get it wrong, but I know the way back.

Terminal Uniqueness

Written June 7, 2026

I used to think that I was so much different than other people, but today I know that I am not unique. Accepting this basic truth has become one of the most liberating discoveries of my life.

In the past, my ego constantly whispered that my struggles and my pain were entirely different from anyone else's, trapping me in a dangerous delusion of spiritual pride. This mindset acted as a barrier, convincing me that because my problems were special, ordinary paths to healing just wouldn't work for me.

It kept me isolated, relying entirely on my own broken willpower and rejecting the guidance of people who had already found their way through, which only kept me trapped in my own suffering.

Eventually, I realized that this insistence on being different was a form of self-centered fear. It allowed me to use my resentments and my past as an alibi to feel sorry for myself and avoid the rigorous, honest work required to change.

Freedom only came when I smashed the illusion of being

separate, let go of my pride, and stepped out of isolation. By accepting that I am just an ordinary person who needs the exact same spiritual principles and way of daily living as everyone else, I was finally able to connect with something greater than myself and a supportive community that helps me grow.

Today, I am simply another member of society, no better and no worse than anyone else walking this earth. Letting go of the need to be separate or special has allowed me to finally trade the heavy burden of isolation for the quiet peace of belonging.

I am just a regular person living a purposeful life, grateful to walk shoulder-to-shoulder with the rest of the human family as we all help each other grow.

Judging Strangers on a Screen

Written June 8, 2026

What's on my mind this morning is that I've noticed how quick we've all gotten to judge each other lately, especially online. Someone's politics, their choices, even just the way they word something, and the judgment shows up before we even decide to let it. I still catch myself doing this more than I'd like to admit.

I need to remember that letting go of judgment and resentment is what frees me from a kind of poison that blocks real peace and connection.

Acting superior is usually just my ego taking over, and it cuts me off from the very help I need.

The moment I feel the urge to pick apart someone else's flaws, that's my cue to turn inward. Instead of focusing on what they did wrong, I try to look honestly at my own behavior, selfishness, or hidden fears. That takes a good deal of internal housecleaning. Facing my own messes. Setting my pride aside. Staying focused on cleaning up my own side of the street.

Once I recognize how much I depend on something greater than myself just to get through, looking down on

anyone else becomes impossible.

Difficult people stop triggering my anger and start looking like people who are simply hurting. I wish I could say I get this right every time. Most days I'm still working on it, one scroll, one comment, one chance to choose differently. I'll try again today.

The Strength to Say I Don't Know

Written June 9, 2026

A friend once told me the strongest people he knew were the ones who'd stopped trying to prove they were strong. I didn't get it back then. I do now.

For years I ran on one quiet rule: figure it out yourself, and if you can't, pretend you did. It wasn't dramatic. It just meant I never called when I should have, never said the hard thing out loud, never let anyone see the parts that weren't working. I told myself that was strength. I now understand it as a form of disguised fear.

Most of us would rather struggle in private than look unsure in public. We avoid the phone call, the favor, the hard conversation, the appointment we keep putting off, and tell ourselves we're just handling it. But avoiding doesn't make us more capable. It just makes our lives smaller, one unasked question at a time.

There's a moment right before someone asks for help, a half-second where pride and need argue with each other. I notice it in other people now. I notice it in myself. The people who push through that moment tend to end up with fuller lives, not because asking solves everything,

but because it keeps them connected instead of slowly drifting into a life of solo workarounds.

The real strength isn't never needing anyone. It's being able to say "I don't have this figured out" and trust that saying it won't cost you anything you can't afford to lose.

If you're sitting on a question you've been meaning to ask somebody, today's as good a day as any.

Resentment Was Never About Them

Written June 10, 2026

For years I carried resentment like it was armor. I told myself I was just being honest, just calling things out, just refusing to let people walk over me. It felt like strength. It took me a long time to see it for what it actually was.

Resentment doesn't start as anger. It starts as self-will. I wanted people, institutions, and even the principles I believed in to operate the way I thought they should. When they didn't, when someone crossed me, or a system failed me, or the world simply didn't bend to what I thought was right, I got angry and called it justified. Underneath it, every time, was something simpler. I wanted control I never had.

The way out wasn't to relitigate who wronged me. It was to look at my own actions. Where had I been selfish. Where had I been afraid. Where had I expected the world to revolve around my idea of how things ought to go.

That kind of honest look is uncomfortable, but it's the

only thing that actually loosens resentment's grip, because resentment feeds on being right and starves when you stop feeding it.

Underneath almost every resentment I uncovered was fear. Fear of losing status. Fear of being powerless. Fear that if I couldn't control the outcome, I'd be left exposed. Fear runs through nearly everything if you're willing to trace it back far enough. It set things in motion in my life that I never intended and never saw coming, all because I was trying to manage things that were never mine to manage in the first place.

What changed wasn't that the people or institutions around me got easier to control. They didn't. What changed was that I stopped expecting to control them. I started asking a different question when the old anger rose up: what am I afraid of right now, and whose job was I trying to do that wasn't mine.

That question still works better for me than staying angry ever did.

Ninety Minutes That Lift the Spirit

Written June 11, 2026

I've learned that when I start feeling sorry for myself because life isn't going the way I think it should, one of the best remedies is to get out of myself and do something for others. It doesn't make my problems disappear, but it changes my perspective.

This morning is one of those opportunities. Every two months, volunteers from throughout our community gather for the **McKinleyville Community Trash Bash**, a 90-minute cleanup effort organized in partnership with the PacOut Green Team. The county provides a 15-yard dumpster, and together we clean roadsides, greenbelt areas, and public spaces of litter and debris.

It may seem like a small thing, but the impact is easy to see. In just an hour and a half, a group of neighbors can make a visible difference in the appearance of our community. More importantly, we connect with one another and share the satisfaction of doing something useful.

I've found that service works that way. When my focus shifts from what's missing in my life to what I can

contribute, my outlook improves. The circumstances may not change, but I do.

So this morning, we'll spend 90 minutes picking up trash. By the end, McKinleyville will be a little cleaner, and many of us will leave feeling a little lighter than when we arrived.

Sometimes the best way to lift our spirits is to lend a hand. This morning if you have some time to spare and need a lift of spirit, join us at 9:00am outside of North Coast Awning.

Love I Didn't Have to Earn

Written June 12, 2026

For most of my life I thought love had to be earned. I thought if I just confessed enough flaws, fixed enough character defects, tried hard enough, I'd finally be worthy of being loved. That kind of thinking will wear you out. It keeps your faith anxious instead of free.

What I'm finding out is that the love and the strength I need were never something I had to qualify for. They were already given. Free. No conditions attached. The real question isn't whether I'm good enough. It's whether I'm willing to stop obsessing over myself long enough to be useful to somebody else.

Real prayer, for me, stopped being about begging and started being about turning outward. Instead of "please fix me," it became "who needs me today." Instead of cataloging every flaw I could find, which is a project with no end, I started resting in the idea that I'm already accepted. Already safe. Already loved.

That rest is where the peace lives. Not in proving myself. Not in digging endlessly through my own wreckage looking for one more thing wrong with me. Just in trusting it's already taken care of, and getting on with loving the people in front of me.

The Work Happens First

Written June 13, 2026

What's on my mind this morning is that there were stretches of my life where I felt like I was doing everything right and getting nowhere. I'd put in the work, stay patient, stay honest, and still nothing on the outside seemed to move. I used to think that meant nothing was happening.

Looking back now, I can see what was really happening all along.

My life right now is the result of something I started a long time ago. Every relationship, every lesson, every hard season was shaped by choices I made when I had no idea what they'd grow into. The day I decided to keep going when I felt done. The thought I chose to hold onto instead of the one that would have pulled me under. All of it built the ground I'm standing on today.

So when I put in honest effort now and nothing changes right away, I try to remember this isn't wasted. I'm not always working for today. Some of what I'm doing now won't pay off for months, maybe years. The work happens first. Whatever comes from it shows up later,

on its own time, not mine.

I don't get to set the schedule. I just get to keep showing up and trust that the effort I put in today will still be there when I need it.

A War With No Negotiation

Written June 14, 2026

We rarely understand deep sadness. We just survive the pain and move on, because we never look at what's actually causing it. When we're young, we believe we can fix everything. Education, self-control, hard work, we think these will make life perfect. I spent years believing willpower alone would save me.

Life doesn't work that way. Sooner or later we run into our own dark, destructive habits, the defects in our character that no amount of willpower can outmuscle. This side of us wrecks our plans and throws everything into disorder. Many people won't accept this, because they think life should always be fair, or that self-will is enough to overcome it.

To grow, we have to admit this inner destructiveness is real, and admit we cannot defeat it alone. It's a war inside us, and there's no compromise, no negotiating with it on our own terms. Self-will fights to stay in charge.

Surrender is what actually wins.

When we stop trying to white-knuckle our way through

and instead hand the fight over to something greater than ourselves, our best self gets the room to thrive. This same battle plays out in everyone, every day. Facing this dark side and surrendering it is the only way to heal, and the only way to understand the pain in this world.

Launching Out Despite the Doubt

Written June 15, 2026

There comes a point in every kind of personal collapse, whether it's a relationship, a career, an addiction, or just a life that's quietly fallen apart, when we have to take a first step toward turning things around. That step is rarely comfortable and never feels like enough.

The biggest mistake we make is thinking we need to feel completely confident before we take it. Taking that first step means surrendering the illusion of control and admitting that our current way of doing things is unmanageable.

It means smashing the ego, stopping the fight with the universe, and facing the truth of our helplessness so we can finally start over. If we wait for our anxieties to disappear, we stay paralyzed by self-centered fear.

This step plays out differently depending on the wreckage we're facing. In a broken relationship, it means admitting we're powerless over how our partner feels or acts, ending the cycle of manipulation, and turning our attention to our own defects of character.

In financial or career ruin, it means setting pride aside,

ending the habit of hiding from our bills, and taking a thoroughly honest inventory of exactly where we stand.

With a secret obsession or habit, it means conceding to our innermost self that we cannot stop on willpower alone, and shattering the delusion that tomorrow will magically be different.

We cannot think our way into right living. We have to act our way into right thinking. Faith without works is dead, and trying to solve our emotional problems through willpower alone is a delusion.

When we're full of doubt, we have to stop staring at our own shadow and launch out on a course of vigorous action. Our fears are just a corroding thread running through our lives, and they start to vanish the moment we stop hiding.

We take our imperfect feelings with us and put our attention on being helpful to others. By cleaning up our own house, trusting a power greater than ourselves, and showing up for the day, clarity returns.

Innocent Versus Pure

Written June 16, 2026

I used to think being good meant I couldn't do much harm. Now I think it's the other way around.

The person who gets caught off guard isn't the dangerous one. It's the person who never thought he'd be tested at all.

There's a difference between innocent and pure. Innocent just means you haven't been tested yet. Pure means you have been tested, more than once, and you chose right anyway.

I'm not safe because I think well of myself. I'm safe when I stop pretending I'm above the same things that trip other people up.

The day I stopped expecting myself to be perfect, I started paying attention. Now I see trouble coming. I know what a bad choice will cost before I make it, not after.

This doesn't mean I've lost faith in people. I still believe in grace. I've just stopped pretending I'm above my own worst moments.

The most honest relationships I have aren't the ones

where everyone assumes the best. They're the ones where we've both stopped pretending we're above anything. That's not a weaker kind of trust. It's the kind that survives real life.

Comparing My Insides to Their Outsides

Written June 17, 2026

Comparing my life to other people never goes well. Comparing my marriage to a couple on TV goes even worse. Here's why I had to stop doing both.

We compare our insides to other people's outsides.

The doubts, the rough days, the slow stretches. All measured against the best parts someone else chose to show. It's not a fair fight.

TV couples make it worse. That relationship isn't even real. It's written. Fixed by the end of the episode. Real life doesn't work that way.

Most comparison starts with a wish that things look a certain way, by a certain time. When they don't, we don't get curious. We get unhappy. And unhappy turns into envy or feeling sorry for ourselves.

The fix isn't pretending other people's lives don't exist. It's looking at what's actually in front of me.

Accepting what's real opens a door that comparing keeps shut. You can't feel grateful and keep score at

the same time.

Everyone only posts their best moments. The bad days stay off camera. I am not exempt from this.

The years of non-glamorous work that make a marriage actually thrive never make it online.

Too Heavy for One Set of Hands

Written June 18, 2026

We say life is "unmanageable" all the time now. The bills keep coming, the cost of groceries keeps climbing, the paycheck doesn't stretch as far as it used to. We use the word like it just means "too much."

But "unmanageable" breaks down simply. Un- meaning not, manage, and

-able meaning capable of. The interesting word is "manage."

It traces back through the Italian word *maneggiare*, meaning to handle or to train a horse. That word comes from the Latin *manus*, meaning hand. To manage something originally meant to hold it in the hand, the way a rider holds the reins.

So when life feels unmanageable, it's not really about how much is happening. It's about whether you can still carry it alone. Something unmanageable isn't fighting you. It's just too heavy for one set of hands.

That's the truth behind a lot of our exhaustion. We keep trying to carry more by ourselves. More side hustles,

more willpower, more this or that. But the problem was never our strength. It was thinking one person should be able to carry that much in the first place.

There's real relief in admitting that. Not everything is meant to be carried alone. Some loads only become bearable when other hands take part of the weight.

The bills don't disappear. The math doesn't change. But a family member who can watch the kids for a weekend, a friend who shows up with no strings attached, a community that pulls together when one of its own is struggling, that changes what the weight feels like.

And there's a deeper hand in this too, one that doesn't show up in a budget or a calendar. Some people call it prayer. Some call it surrender. Whatever the word, it's the act of admitting that we were never built to hold everything ourselves, and that something larger than us is willing to take the other end of the load.

That's not a fix. It's something sturdier than a fix. It's not carrying it alone anymore, in any sense of the word.

Safety Was Never About Control

Written June 19, 2026

I used to think safety meant control. If I held tight enough to what I had, my plans, my reputation, my sense of being treated fairly, I figured nothing could really touch me.

It never worked that way.

The harder I gripped, the more afraid I got. Every loss felt like a betrayal. Every slight demanded justice. I was exhausted from defending a life that was never mine to defend in the first place.

The more I think about it, this comes clear: I'm not promised comfort or fairness. I'm only promised that wherever I'm led, I'll be carried through it.

That's a hard trade. It means letting go of outcomes I couldn't control anyway, and giving up the habit of keeping score on who wronged me. It means doing the next right thing and leaving the verdict to something bigger than my own judgment.

And the part I'd rather skip: I call myself a person of faith, but most days I run on my own common sense and

slap a higher name on it when it's convenient. I lean on what I can see and measure, when I'm supposed to be leaning on what I can't. I'm still trying.

Letting go of that grip isn't weakness. It's the only peace I've found that doesn't depend on getting my way.

Picking Up Trash to Quiet My Head

Written June 20, 2026

When my head gets loud, I've learned a trick that actually works. I go outside and pick up trash along my street. I've done this for years. This trick works well.

It sounds small. It is small. But something happens during that time spent that no amount of thinking my way out ever does.

My hands get busy. My eyes drop to the sidewalk. And somewhere in there, my mind quietly stops circling around me.

I start thinking about the neighbor who'll walk this way later. The kid on a bike. The street itself, looking a little better than it did an hour ago.

Most of my misery, if I'm honest, comes from too much attention turned inward. The same worries. The same self. Round and round.

Action breaks that loop in a way thinking never can. One piece of trash, then another, and somewhere along the way I stop being the center of the universe for a little while.

I come back lighter. Not because I solved anything. Just because I stopped carrying myself around for a bit.

A Pile of Easy Things

Written June 21, 2026

I used to think change required a complete overhaul. A new schedule, a new mindset, a new me by Monday.

So I waited for the big moment. The day I'd finally have enough willingness to do it right.

That day never came.

What came instead was easy things. A phone call I'd been avoiding, finally made. A drawer full of mail, finally sorted. The lawn, finally mowed.

Nothing dramatic. Nothing that took courage.

But easy things, done one after another, stop being small. By evening I look back and the day adds up to more than any single piece of it.

That's the part I keep forgetting and keep relearning. The big change was never going to arrive in one piece. It was always going to arrive as a pile of easy ones, stacked.

And the pile doesn't reset overnight. Tomorrow I start one teaspoon ahead, not at zero.

This morning, one easy thing. Then another. Let tonight surprise you.

When the Voice Steps Back

Written June 22, 2026

My spirit is that still, small voice in the background that never lies to me. If there's a deity, a God, this is how He reaches me, by impressing on my spirit what I need to know, and from there, onto me. My conscience is what happens when that voice meets a real moment, a real choice. Most days I don't feel two signals. I feel one. A pull, or a push back.

For years I had to work at this. I couldn't skip it. I'd look at a thought, then check it against what that voice was already telling me. I'd look at an action, then check that too. Were they selfless? True? Morally aligned? It took effort. Sometimes it wore me out.

Then, somewhere along the way, it stopped feeling like work. It just started happening on its own. If something feels right, I do it. If it doesn't, I don't. No long debate in my head. Just a clear answer.

I'm not saying this to brag. It actually surprised me. I thought the goal was to get better at checking myself all the time. Turns out the real goal was needing to check less, because listening to that voice had become part of who I am.

Here's what I still watch closely. When I start putting myself first again, the voice doesn't get louder. It gets quieter, almost like it's stepped back. And in its place, I feel restless. Irritable. Discontent, in a way that wasn't

there the day before. That's not random. That's a signal. It means I've pushed my own wants ahead of the voice that usually leads.

So that uncomfortable feeling isn't the problem. It's useful. It's a tap on the shoulder telling me something's off. When that happens, the fix is almost always the same. I look at where I went wrong. I admit it, right away,

without making excuses. Make amends where necessary.

Then I let things settle back down, and that still, small voice once again becomes audible.

Serenity doesn't return because life got easier. It returns because I got honest again, and I'm listening once more.

It’s actually pretty simple, yet not easy. Not being perfect. Just staying close enough to that quiet voice that I notice the moment it steps back.

The Secret Is in the Dishes

Written June 23, 2026

We do the dishes together every night. Miss K and I.

It's often the only "together" time we get outside of sitting down to eat. Today was such a day.

We didn't plan it that way. It just became ours, and somehow we began looking forward to it.

There's a temptation in this culture to believe intimacy has a price tag. That closeness requires a destination, a reservation, an event.

But real connection rarely arrives wrapped in something special. It shows up in the ordinary minutes we're willing to give our full attention to.

A sink full of dishes. A few quiet minutes. Two people, present, with nowhere else they'd rather be.

That's it. That's the whole secret.

Contentment isn't found by chasing bigger moments. It's uncovered in the willingness to be fully present in the small ones already in front of us.

Tonight, look for the version of this already happening in your life. It's probably smaller than you think, and worth far more than you may realize.

When Good Things Become Obstacles

Written June 24, 2026

There are things in my life that are good. Useful. Even things I'm proud of. But sometimes those very things stand quietly between me and the peace I'm trying to build. For a long time I thought growth meant adding 'more.' More effort, more willpower, more good habits piled on top of old patterns. That rarely worked.

What actually changed things was being willing to let go of something I valued, simply because it had become an obstacle to the life I wanted. That kind of letting go doesn't look like progress to anyone watching. It can look like loss, like backing away from something perfectly reasonable.

It isn't my place to decide what someone else needs to release. My only job is to stay honest about what's blocking me. I'm not whole yet. But I'd rather be incomplete and pointed in the right direction than polished and immobile.

Enough Light for the Next Step

Written June 25, 2026

Growth in understanding and effectiveness doesn't happen all at once, and it doesn't happen by sitting still waiting to feel ready. Insight tends to arrive in pieces, a little more disclosed each time we stay willing and keep showing up. We rarely get the whole picture ahead of time. We get enough light for the next step, and then we move.

That movement matters. Understanding deepens through action, not just reflection. We act on what we've come to see so far, and through that action, more becomes clear. Insight and effectiveness grow side by side, each one feeding the other.

We don't need everything figured out before we begin.

We just need today's portion, used as well as we can.

Rehearsing a Disaster That Never Comes

Written June 26, 2026

I catch myself doing it almost every day. Standing in the present, but my mind is already three steps into a future that hasn't happened yet.

My mind likes to write stories. And it almost never writes a good one. It picks the worst case, plays it out in full, and hands it to me like a fact instead of a fear.

The strange part is how real it feels. Like I'm being careful. Like I'm getting ready. But really I'm just suffering twice, once today in my head and once if it ever actually happens.

While I'm busy rehearsing disaster, the day right in front of me goes by unattended. The conversation, the task, the small good thing right here, all of it gets missed because I was not fully in today.

I've noticed too that the forecast almost never matches what actually happens. Real life has a way of showing up different than the version I built in my head, sometimes harder, most of the time easier, but rarely the way I rehearsed it. So all that worry didn't even prepare

me. It just cost me the time.

I don't have a future yet. I only have today. So lately I try to bring myself back, every time I notice I've wandered off into tomorrow.

Today is the most important day in my life, as today is the only day in which I might make a difference. Tomorrow can wait.

Quiet Power in Routine

Written June 27, 2026

As I go over today's task list and glance at my calendar, I notice something simple: I take comfort in the stability of it. I enjoy a good vacation as much as anyone, but I've always leaned toward comfort over excitement. And I've found that discovery doesn't require travel. It can happen right here, in the doing of what I routinely do.

There's a quiet power in that kind of routine. Excitement is often just another word for restlessness. It promises fullness, but tends to leave a person chasing the next, greater thing.

A steady life, built on the same small acts done daily, works differently. It doesn't ask for a peak experience to feel worthwhile. It finds worth in the ordinary, like right this very moment: quiet time with my coffee, a few pages of reading, some reflection, a little writing in my journal before the day even starts.

To me, that is the epitome of freedom. When you're not chasing the next high, you're not managing the crash that follows it either. My peace doesn't depend on circumstances lining up just right.

Routine also builds something excitement can't. Trust in yourself. Every day I keep the small commitments, waking at the same time, doing the work, telling the truth, and I prove to myself that I'm someone who follows through. That's a different kind of confidence than the one that comes from a thrill.

And there's room in a quiet life for real connection. Excitement tends to be a solitary pursuit, even in a crowd. Routine, especially the kind that includes reflection and service to others, opens space for people to actually know me and be known.

None of this means routine has to be dull. It just means the aliveness comes from depth instead of speed, from paying attention to what's already in front of me rather than always reaching for what's next.

The world's appetite for excitement isn't wrong, exactly. It's just often mistaken for a solution to something that quiet, steady living already resolves.

The Holiday Problem Drinkers Dread

Written June 28, 2026

There was a time when alcohol was my answer. It dulled the emotional pain I didn't know how to face, and for a while it worked. Drinking started out fun, but it didn't take long before I was using it as a medicine rather than a social lubricant.

Then it stopped working, but I kept reaching for it anyway. The relief was gone, replaced by an obsession I couldn't reason my way out of.

I knew exactly what I was doing to myself. I could see the slow damage as clearly as anyone watching from the outside.

And still I did it. Knowing and stopping turned out to be two completely different things.

That gap between what I understood and what I was able to do felt like a kind of madness. No amount of willpower closed it.

What finally helped wasn't trying harder. It was admitting I couldn't do this on my own, and letting that

honesty be the opening instead of remaining in bondage.

The Fourth of July is coming up, and for many problem drinkers, this is a day that they dread. They already know what's going to happen, and it always ends the same, in a bad way, whether they remember what happened or not.

If any of this sounds familiar, you don't have to take it on alone. Reach out to someone, a friend, a counselor, anyone you trust. I can help as well.

That first conversation can be the beginning of something different. If I can stop for good, you can too.

Surrender Is Not a Last Resort

Written June 29, 2026

I used to think I could handle the big moments if I just tried hard enough. Then I'd hit something too heavy to deal with, and I would reach for help, panicked, only when I had no other move left. That's not living within spiritual principles. That is not surrender. That is bargaining.

Real surrender is not a last resort. It is not something I save for emergencies and otherwise ignore. If I only lean on something greater than myself when I am desperate, I am still running the show the rest of the time. I am just borrowing power when it suits me.

That kind of half-measure is dangerous. It lets me feel spiritual without actually giving it up. I get the comfort of belief without the discipline of trust. And a little bit of faith, used that way, can pull me right back into my own head, my own plans, my own control.

The only thing that works for me is daily surrender. Not just handing over the crisis, but handing over the will underneath it. My preferences. My timeline. My idea of how things should go. Each morning, before I start my

day.

When I do that consistently, something changes. I stop trying to bend outcomes to match what I want, and I start paying attention to what is actually being asked of me. That is a completely different way to live.

It is slower. It is less dramatic. But it is the only version of trust that actually lasts.

Serenity Was Never the Absence of Trouble

Written June 30, 2026

I used to think that if I planned carefully enough, worried enough, controlled enough, I could keep disaster away.

It never worked. Life kept happening anyway, on its own schedule, with its own plans.

Somewhere along the way I had to trade that approach for a different one. Instead of trusting my own grip on things, I started trusting something larger than myself. Call it God, call it a higher power, call it the order of the universe. The name matters less than the change.

I am not here to run the show. I am here to take the next spiritually-indicated action, and do it without question.

Some days that means showing up to something ordinary. A conversation. A task. A person who needs a few minutes of my attention. Nothing dramatic. Just the part in front of me.

What surprised me is the more I let go of running things,

and the more I simply tried to do what seemed right in front of me, the calmer I got. Not because life slowed down or got easier. It didn't.

But somehow, when trouble showed up anyway, I could meet it without falling apart. Serenity was not the absence of hard things. It was what happened when I stopped trying to control them and started trusting instead.