

NOVATIONS

The Monthly Newsletter
of the Northern Virginia
Overeaters Anonymous
Intergroup

November 2023

Step 11 -

A Life of Loving Looks

Step 11: Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

If I had a dollar for every time I've heard someone say: "I can't meditate because my mind is constantly spinning like a hamster on a wheel." ... I'd have a house on the beach by now. Well, I don't have that house, but I do have a reply I give to people who say that: "You are not alone."

I've heard "professional meditators" (Buddhist monks and nuns, those who teach about meditation and contemplation, etc.) say the same thing—essentially that they look peaceful and serene on the outside, but on the inside all kinds of things are going on! And if it happens to them, who am I to think it won't happen to me?

When I started getting back into meditation after many years of abandoning it, I started at stoplights. I figured that I was sitting there doing nothing so I may as well make those moments productive, and I simply "touched base" with HP. It was that "Loving Look" that we can give to a spouse, a child, a best friend, a beloved pet ... just a connection for that moment. That was kind of fun, so I tried it while waiting in the grocery line, in the kitchen while chopping veggies, while folding laundry. I learned to keep the radio off in the car and the TV off at home. I started enjoying silence so that I could practice my "Loving Looks."

In time, I tried sitting still for short periods. While I wasn't very good at it then, and I still can't say I'm good at it now, I keep working at it. There's a reason they call it "practicing meditation." It takes me trying over and over and over again to center my mind and become just a teeny bit more still than I was the moment before. I've heard it characterized as "1000 turns to God" and I love that phrase. To me it means exactly what it says: Each time I find myself off course or woolgathering, I turn again to the Center, to my HP. Yes, the "Loving Look."

Step 11 - A Life of Loving Looks (Continued)

Thoughts and distractions naturally pop up when I'm attempting to meditate: the next item on the grocery list, the task I wanted to accomplish that day, the need to remember to pick up my grandson from school—they're endless. Then come the resentments from slights that happened 25 years ago, the memories of a particularly good party, the taste of a favorite food and more. My mind goes everywhere BUT in the direction I want it to - inward and deep into contact with my HP within. Yet, I keep at it. Sometimes for just a brief moment, other times longer periods. "Loving Looks."

The "experts" suggest lots of methods: focusing on breath; focusing on an object; breathing in peace and breathing out stress; breathing in the problem of a loved one and transforming it in the mind/heart into a loving message breathed out for them; placing oneself in an imaginary peaceful place; imagining oneself surrounded by loving light; repeating a "mantra" or phrase. The possibilities are legion!! There is no need to pick just one either. I often use any of those suggestions at different times, even during the same meditation period. I use anything that draws me back to the "Loving Look."

If I had to express a "goal" in all of this, it would probably be to live a life of Loving Looks. A connection to HP that is so frequent it's almost constant. Lofty, I know, but worth reaching for.

-Alice McD.

See Page Two Below!!



Are You Using the Keys Of Willingness?

**How Many of these
Keys of Willingness
Do you Use?**

- Am I willing to rely on a Higher Power who is not me?
- Am I willing to make a decision to turn my will and my life over to my Higher Power?
- Am I willing to seek through prayer and meditation to improve my conscious contact with my Higher Power?
- Am I willing to pray only for knowledge of his will and the power to carry that out?
- Am I willing to pray?
- Am I willing to get and work with a sponsor?
- Am I willing to commit and follow a food plan daily?
- Am I willing to go to meetings?
- Am I willing to do writings?
- Am I willing to let go of old ideas and old ways?
- Am I willing to be honest and to live by the truth?
- Am I willing to embrace change?
- Am I willing to keep coming back?
- Am I willing to be open-minded?
- Am I willing to practice acceptance that I need help?
- Am I willing to live in the solution and not the problem?
- Am I willing to persevere through good times and bad?
- Am I willing to surrender?
- Am I willing to do a 4th Step?
- Am I willing to continue to work the steps?
- Am I willing to take action, any action, instead of inaction?

These keys and others lead
to change and recovery.

-submitted by Kristin W.

Tradition 11:

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television, and other public media of communication.

This Month's Spiritual Principles:

**Step 11: Spiritual Awareness
Tradition 11: Anonymity
Concept 11: Humility**

What's New?

See all the news @oanova.com
but check this out:

New In-Person Meeting beginning Wednesday, November 8

Trinity Presbyterian Church
651 Dranesville Rd. Rm 10
Herndon, VA 20170

(see www.oanova.com for more info)

From the Editor

Dear Readers - NoVAtions brings you articles to support your recovery, and gives you information about Overeaters Anonymous Intergroup in Northern Virginia.

If **you are interested in writing** a short article about a Step, Tradition or a Spiritual Principle that you have worked through, please contact me for details. (The steps & traditions correspond to the month, e.g. Step/Tradition 12 for December)

Keep Coming Back, Cathy C., Editor
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