

M E D I T A T I O N | O |

A group of women gathered at my studio recently to be trial subjects in an upcoming meditation workshop one of the women is presenting this month. Volumes have been written trumpeting the practical benefits of meditation, yet all too often I hear, “I can’t do it. I can’t quiet my mind. It doesn’t work for me.” Somewhere along the spiritual continuum, a lot of folks missed the point.

I don’t practice to relax. I don’t practice to quiet my mind. I don’t practice to become a better meditator. I practice to notice. I practice to let go, without attachment, without judgment. If you’re waiting for the perfect moment, the perfect mood, the perfect cushion, clothing, music, incense, CD, you are cheating yourself out of one of the most useful tools in our wellness arsenal.

Try this. Find a spot to sit undisturbed for a few minutes--start slow. Get comfortable. Set your timer. Close your eyes. Breathe. When the siren outside screams past, notice (don’t curse), the sound. When the cat jumps into your lap, notice the sensation. When your mind revisits the argument

you had with your partner last night, notice the thought. Don’t judge sounds, sensations, thoughts. Don’t get mad at your mind for dragging

Notice.



you into the past, racing you into the future. Notice, then let go, detach. Stay. Breathe. Repeat, and then repeat the process again tomorrow, and the day after that.

You can’t do this wrong. You can only not do it, and in not meditating, you are depriving yourself of learning to coexist peacefully with the world around you. Practically speaking, this means, the next time another driver cuts you off in traffic, notice, do not attach, do not react. Instead of railing against a co-worker’s procrastination to complete a needed task, notice your resistance, your frustration, and in that moment of noticing, choose, without malice, without judgment, the higher thought.

Notice. Simply notice.

— Carol M.

HEARD AT MEETINGS

I didn’t know that fear was such a chameleon. Fear is like paying interest on a loan you haven’t taken out yet.

AA is the only place where you get treated like a king when you get here and eventually you demote yourself to servant gladly.

Don’t tell God how big your problem is, tell your problem how big God is.

I call God GUS—Grateful Universal Spirit.

SELF: Searching Endlessly Losing Faith.

With gratitude, we learn the lesson that making the most of what we have turns into more.

People nod a lot at meetings. That’s why they call it the Land of Nod.



**43rd Rhode Island Convention
March 22-24, 2019**

The Rhode Island 43rd Convention will be held on March 22, 23 and 24 at Gurney’s Newport Resort & Marina, Goat Island, Newport. To obtain a registration form, log on to the Rhode Island Alcoholics Anonymous website at: aainri.com. Then click on the “Register Today” button just below the convention logo.

THE PERIL OF JUSTIFICATION

In our book we are warned against justifiable anger: “the dubious luxury of normal men.”

I will submit that many justifiable forms of behavior are perilous to us alcoholics. For instance, let’s consider our financial dealings and extract the words financial and justifi-

in personal inventories. I am reminded of the ominous words Ebenezer Scrooge spoke to his late business partner, Jacob Marley: “But, you were always a good man of business.”

In a fictional novel I had preempted a character’s entrance into this perilous rabbit hole by endowing him the justifiable belief that “man cannot afford integrity when mouths need to be fed.” I actually believe the opposite, though I personally fall short of the principle. Man can, and this alcoholic must believe in the principality of integrity and that mouths needing to be

fed, will be. My personal history when climbing into this “wheelbarrow of faith,” reminds me that God has always ultimately provided. Never should spiritual growth be sacrificed by justified compromise of integrity.

cation as a theme. Getting uncomfortable? I might be, after all, why turn this inconvenient rake of rigor across my business ledgers, worse yet my tax returns?

Each October, when the frost bites the windows of the hall, the discussion in our home group turns its focus upon step 10. In the days which followed a recent discussion I found myself reflecting upon my personal business dealings and discovering, though no legal malfeasance, how often fear crept in to justify a softer, less rigorous, means of conducting affairs and how easily I felt justified in hazing the lines of integrity. The question we may ask ourselves is a fuzzy one. Is it acceptable as long as it’s legal? The answer becomes personal and we AA members have learned through justifiable anger that “legal” isn’t necessarily an acceptable justification. The peril of cutting corners, or slipping through sly, not-so-rigorously-honest, tax loopholes, can remind some of us of the peril incumbent in being less than painstaking



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I apologize if my tone sounds like a lecture. It’s merely intended to suggest reflection. No one can be the arbiter of another’s financial conduct. It’s ultimately between you and God, after talking to your sponsor, of course!

— Mike L.

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