

Serenity Sermon  
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God. Grant me the serenity:

One of the most cherished prayers. Plaques, bookmarks, bumper stickers, coffee mugs etc

12 steppers by the millions pray it every day, and it changes lives.

**It has been said that the greatest invention of the 20th century was the founding AA the original version by Reinhold. Niebuhr reads:1943, adapted it. Some believe it dates as early as 500 AD**

**God, give us grace to accept with serenity**

**The things that cannot be changed,**

**Courage to change the things which should be changed**

**And the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other.**

Serenity is a word that exudes calmness and peace, it connotes wholeness and fullness of life. When you're lying down with face in the mud of helplessness the only way is to look up past yourself, admitting that you must turn from your own powerlessness and yield to someone higher. It's in seeking spiritual peace as oppose to worldly peace.

This is the beginning of recovery, of reclaiming one's soul. It's in a sense a homecoming, a deep inner sense that all is well. We're not talking about the rational, it's beyond that.

As Julian of Norwich proclaimed, "All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all shall be well, all manner of things shall be well." This is an experiential realization that amidst the pain and brokenness of our lives, all is well.

*.....: how do you experience serenity:.....:*

**To accept the things I cannot change.....**

**It's really a matter of control. Instead of trying to muster up the will, it's giving up the control, it's handing the reins over to a better driver.**

Make a list of all the things that bring you happiness, then ask yourself just how much control you have over these things.

At any moment the thing that brings us happiness can be taken away from us. We are vulnerable. We try time and time again to control our lives. Our addictions are an attempt to anesthetize our feelings. By addictions I mean anything that we use to escape those difficult emotions or internal self talk such as drugs, food, work, relationships, Facebook, sex, gambling, tv.. "....and the list is endless.

Accepting our own limitations and the reality that love really is a conditional thing, is perhaps the most difficult part. We are taught early on that our value is based on what we possess.....who we know.....how we look.....what our job is..... Etc etc etc.

And this is where we learn to hide or compensate for the fear, shame, and inadequate feeling we hold.

We seek approval, acceptance and love and will stop at nothing to get it. When we don't get it we feel worse which only feeds addiction. Then the addiction puts us in momentary elation, until it doesn't, then we up the anti, and then the shame sets in which proves we are worthless.

All this to say that accepting these things and the power they hold over us, is the beginning of becoming whole.

We must also accept the givens of our lives, right where we are, right now. We may have illness, unemployed, in a troubled relationship, grieving, or depressed.

Once we accept this and turn it over to a power higher than our own, then we can see that no matter what, all will be well again...

all is well right now. This enables us to start living, rather than simply existing. When we accept our hardships, there is no room for us to be critical or bitter. Those kinds of resentments only fuel more problems in our lives.

**The question for you to consider is this: what can I do to accept the unpleasant givens of my life that cannot be changed.**

*Courage to change the things I can*

"courage is fear that has said its prayers"

The fears of failure or success.....fear of feelings... Fears of sickness, loss of a loved one, economic hardship, death.

It takes courage to face ourselves, to face our fears and move through them to the other side.

And yet we must do this. List those fears and examine them, feel them, and make a recovery plan.

**The question is what do I have power to change and what do I not.**

**And the wisdom to know the difference over what we can change and what we cannot**

Wisdom comes from life experience.

Wisdom comes from discernment, Not manipulation or intelligence or cleverness

Not my will but yours be done. We need to get out of the way.

Proverbs 9:4-5 ask and it will be given unto you .search and you will find. Knock and the Door will be opened for you. For everyone who ask receives. And everyone who searches finds

And for anyone who knocks the door will be opened

The question is what motivates you?

*What guides your decisions?*

*And how detached are you from getting your way?*

**Here is the complete serenity prayer.**

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change.

Courage to change the things I can

And the wisdom to know the difference

Living one day at a time enjoying one moment at a time

Accepting hardships as a pathway to peace  
Taking as he did, this sinful world as it is,  
Not as I would have it  
Trusting that she will make all things right if I surrender to her will  
That I may be reasonably happy in this life  
And supremely happy with him in the next  
Amen