

Relief from the Bondage of Self

February 27

These words are a source of discomfort for those of us in recovery. Who understands better than we do how burdened we are within ourselves in our addictions? Living within our island of self and chained to childlike emotions, we wanted what we wanted without regard for anyone. If getting what we wanted meant barging to the head of the line or stepping on someone's toes, we cared little who was in our way.

We remained a slave to our disease. Stuck in a drug-induced trance, drawn to a single thought of more, we ruined our lives and the lives of others. Many lose jobs, reputations, and families; yet, these tragic losses could not free us from the bondage of self. No limit could contain what we would do to have enough of what we thought we needed. Enough was never enough. We are sick people trying to get well from a disease that never sleeps.

The solution to all our problems is found in the rooms of recovery. Twelve-step programs give us a way out of our tortured and delusional thinking so that the bondage of self can be broken. But if we are to relinquish this extreme exhibition of selfishness and self-centeredness, hope and faith must take its place. The Steps makes this possible. How fortunate we are to have the precious gifts of sobriety to use when we need help. New ways of responding to life promote freedom from the bondage of self, one of our treasured miracles.

TODAY'S MEDITATION

Dear God, please use me as a channel of your peace so I might be set free of the things preventing me from reaching you.

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"Freedom, then, lies only in our innate human capacity to choose between different sorts of bondage, bondage to desire or self-esteem, or bondage to the light that lightens all our lives."—Sri Madhava

