

Letting Go of Expectations

July 24

In the role I played as wife and mother, a pattern emerged as I let go of my denial. My exaggerated expectations were the cause of most of my frustrations.

I expected others to do what I wanted, when I wanted it. I always thought it was the other guy's job: "Can't you see this needs to be done?" or, "Why do I have to ask you to ___?"

For me, love and affection were conditional, based on expectations being met. If you got it right, then everyone was happy, but only for a little while. Days were consumed with my doling out orders and outlining expectations of what needed to follow, as everyone around me grew more resentful and argumentative.

This relationship problem sounds familiar to many in recovery. It is self-inflicted. It is ours alone. We expect perfection in others but ignore that same measure in our own lives because it was too much work for us.

One exercise in letting go of expectations is to make a list of expectations in one column. The second column header asks *How Important Is It?* Each expectation is assigned a number. Number one is least important and number ten is most important. A third column header asks, "Is this *my* business my responsibility?" Answers are either yes, or no. After each line and response is checked, we end the exercise with a prayer: "Dear Higher Power, please take this from me."

It doesn't take long to see that the quicker we focused on what our business was as opposed to our expectations of others, the happier and more content we remain.

TODAY'S MEDITATION

Dear God. I know the less expectations I have of me, the less I have of others. I know now those expectations were a setup for failure.

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"In order to be free, we must learn how to let go. Release the hurt. Release the fear. Refuse to entertain your old pain. The energy it takes to hang onto the past is holding you back from a new life. What is it you would let go of today?"

— Mary Manin Morrissey

