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HEADING OFF OUR SHORCOMINGS

The best way for me to tell if a short coming is screwing up my life is step 10. It is interwoven in my life as a check against the subtle but painful defects of charactor or short comings if you will. The difficult thing is to recognize when a defect of character is actually wordiing it's way from the horizon to the center of my life.

Actually, when I am felling funny about something that I am about to do, am doing, or have done, I have an awareness of a defect or short coming opposing the will of God in my life. This awareseess is called my consience.

If there is something that I have done, whether it was 5 minutes or 5 years ago and if it creeps into block me from th will of God then there are a numbers of things that I can do. After there is a definite procedure I follow. First, since I have surrendered to what the people in N.A. have told me, I quickly recall that what I did was because I was sick, AND THAT IT IS NOT WORTH DYING OVER. Thus thi king, I have affirmed the desire to stay clean and sober in spite of the dilema, no matter how large it may seem. Also, I have affirmed my surrender to you people of N.A. and only then do I over come the alienation of being a drug addict. Then, I put myself, through the grace of God, in his hands to make me a better person. Only this placing of my trust in God, sllows me to write step 10 out fearlessly and thougoughly. Also my surrender to God and the people in N.A. gives me the integrity to share what I have written with another human being in N.A., usually my sponser. He usually gives me some feed back, such as "Jus dont do things that you fell funny about beforw you do them, so you won't feel funny later."

When I am off on my own with only God to keep me out of trouble and with out benefit of the N.A. people around, I find that my self will can move in fast. I can become suseptable to doing things that I feel very odd about doing, such as stealing tomatoes from a neighbors garden, or contemplating some act I feel badd about. I could, for , example, have a resentful attitude, maybe because things weren't going as I wanted them to ~~phah~~ day and feel like isolating myself from people.

I knew, from what N.A. members with anger-- long terms of total abstinence have told me, that if I isolate myself with anger then I am cut off from help of God, people and spiritual principles. I can not win alone against ~~dryers~~ drugs. I need God, N.A. people and the steps to help me. I can not live long on self will and so I pray that "God protect me from myself and thy will not mine be done in me and through me." The important thing about praying is to mean it and really surrender my will, "Not mine!, but thine! O'Lord, be done in me and through me."

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This petition to God if sincere saves the day for me. If however, I am distracted by selfishness of my will that I don't mean my prayer, but that the prayer is just words-then I think it through and usually I can see my old pattern of grabbing and snatching what I think that life owes me and recall where my will get me, in a mental institution and in hospital intensive care units. Finally, the best prevention I know of selfless service to others saves my day and more seriously my life.

The answer to escaping self-will's ends of jails institutions and death is the way of selfless service to others.. We ,drug addicts can best help out our selves by helping out another addict, and forgetting our head trips for awhile Plus, by helping him or her we are ,by our being there enabling them to find anew and better way of life. This also reenforces our program out.

I can always remind that besides an addict in recovery iam a human being and, and will as long as I am human make larger and smaller mistakes. I can only hope that through practicing the principles of NA recovery that I will come to a new and better way of living. That by getting my own house in order I can be of better and better able to functionally carry the message to the addict whose life is alot worse than mine, but whose life today echoes my old life.

So I have the way of the primary purpose of every na group, I make it my way ~~thxxx~~ to carry the message to the addict who still suffers and to practice these principles in all my affairs. To follow it in spirit it is to stay clean and sober and carryn the message to th addict who still suffers from his or her active addiction.

To summarize: I can only improve with the help of God. Also I can only improve with the help of narcotics anonymous . I follow the 12 steps. I reaffirm my desire to stay clean and sober..I pray to be used as an instrument of GOD's grace, with with gratitude and selfless service. I get in touch by phone or in meetings with addicts who are seeking an answer to thier drug problem and share my own experience strenght and hope.....

PEACE AND LOVE, H. F.