BEYOND BACK-TO-BASICS, A DESIGN FOR LIVING

Writing Prompts

Steps 6-9 (with 2-Way Prayer)

Writing Prompts for Month 3

The following are daily writing prompts from the Big Book of AA and the Back-to-Basics script. Please use these prompts as a tool to help you continue to work your program. You don't have to write on each question, choose the topics that are up for you this month. Write for at least 5-10 minutes a day and call someone (or record a text message) and share your daily writing. This way we all recover together.

Week 1

“…Once we have taken this [5th] step, withholding nothing, we are delighted. We can look the world in the eye. We can be alone at perfect peace and ease. Our fears fall from us. We begin to feel the nearness of our Creator. We may have had certain spiritual beliefs, but now we begin to have a spiritual experience. The feeling that the [media] problem has disappeared will often come strongly. We feel we are on the Broad Highway, walking hand in hand with the Spirit of the Universe.”

* + - What was your experience giving away your 4th step?
    - Where do you feel more peace and ease?
    - Where have your fears fallen away?
    - Where do you feel nearer to you Higher Power
    - Have you begun to feel that your media problem is disappearing? Explain.

"Returning home we find a place where we can be quiet for an hour, carefully reviewing what we have done. We thank [our Higher Power] from the bottom of our heart… Taking [the Big Book] down from our shelf we turn to the page which contains the twelve steps. Carefully reading the first five proposal we ask if we have omitted anything…Is our work solid so far?"

* + - Is your work solid so far? Explain?

"It is plain that a life which includes deep resentment leads only to futility and unhappiness. To the precise extent that we permit these, do we squander the hours that might have been worthwhile. But the [media addict], whose hope is the maintenance and growth of a spiritual experience, this business of resentment is infinitely grave. We have found that it is fatal."

* + Where have you found resentment to be fatal in your ability to recovery from media?

"We Turned back to the list…We were prepared to look at it from an entirely different angle. We began to see that…the people who wronged us were perhaps spiritually sick. Though we did not like their symptoms and the way these disturbed us, they, like ourselves, were sick too. We asked [our Higher Power] to help us show them the same tolerance, pity, and patience that we would cheerfully grant a sick friend."

* + Can you see the people on your resentment list as sick?
  + How can you cheerfully treat them with tolerance, patience, kindliness, and love?

“…My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen.”

* + Go through each line of this prayer and write about what it means to you.

Week 2

How has your media addiction affected other people in our life? Please answer the following questions. Don't worry that you have every circumstance. You will be repeating these steps again. Answer what comes up for today.

* 1. Where have you used media to avoid getting close to someone else? Who was hurt by this?
  2. Where have you used media to fight with someone? Who was hurt by this?
  3. Where have you used media to gossip or destroy someone else's reputation? Who was hurt by this?
  4. Where have you used media to avoid not working for your boss (your boss can include yourself if you are self-employed)? Who was hurt by this?
  5. Where have you used media to avoid helping and giving service to others? Who was hurt by this?
  6. Where have you used media to avoid seeking help from your Higher Power? Who was hurt by this?
  7. Where have you used media to avoid your own feelings? Who was hurt by this?
  8. Where have you used media to avoid being in your body and in nature? Who was hurt by this?

List the people who you have harmed by your media addiction and add it to your amends list. Think about including yourself and you Higher Power on this list.

“…Now we go out to our fellows and repair the damage done in the past. We attempt to sweep away the debris which has accumulated out of our effort to live on self-will and run the show ourselves. If we haven’t the will to do this, we ask until it comes. Remember it was agreed at the beginning *we would go to any lengths for victory over alcohol (or in our case, media addiction)*.”

* + Is there anyone on your list that you don't feel willing to make amends to? If so are you willing to ask your HP to help you be willing?
  + Are you still willing to go to any lengths to recover from media addiction?

“…It is seldom wise to approach an individual, who still smarts from our injustice to [them], and announce that we have gone religious. In the prize ring, this would be called leading with the chin. Why lay ourselves open to being branded fanatics or religious bores? We may kill a future opportunity to carry a beneficial message. But our [person] is sure to be impressed with a sincere desire to set right the wrong. [They are] going to be more interested in a demonstration of good will than in our talk of spiritual discoveries.”

* + Will you be okay if someone you make amends to is not ready to accept your amends?
  + Are you willing to put the results into you HP's hands?

“…Nevertheless, with a person we dislike, we take the bit in our teeth. It is harder to go to an enemy than to a friend, but we find it much more beneficial to us. We go to [them] in a helpful and forgiving spirit, confessing our former ill feeling and expressing our regret.”

* + Is there anyone on your list you dislike?
  + How do you plan on making amends to them in a forgiving spirit?
  + Are you willing to confess your wrongs and express regret?

“Under no condition do we criticize such a person or argue. Simply we tell [them] that we will never get over [media addiction] until we have done our utmost to straighten out the past. We are there to sweep off our side of the street, realizing that nothing worthwhile can be accomplished until we do so, never trying to tell [them] what [they] should do. [Their] faults are not discussed. We stick to our own. If our manner is calm, frank, and open, we will be gratified with the result.”

* + Where do you still want to criticize the other person?
  + How will you keep the focus on yourself and clean up your side of the street?
  + How will you keep calm, frank and open?

“There may be some wrongs we can never fully right. We don’t worry about them if we can honestly say to ourselves that we would right them if we could. Some people cannot be seen—we send them an honest letter…There may be a valid reason for postponement in some cases. But we don't delay if it can be avoided. We should be sensible, tactful, considerate, and humble without being servile or scraping. As God's people we stand on our feet; we don't crawl before anyone.”

* + Are there any amends you must postpone? Why?
  + How will you make amends to people who have died or can't be seen?
  + How will you stay humble without becoming servile or scraping?

Week 3

“If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are half way through. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word “serenity” and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.”

* + Are your feelings of uselessness and self-pity starting to disappear**? Explain.**
  + Are you starting to gain interest in your fellows? Explain.
  + Are you less self-seeking? Explain.
  + Are your fears of people lessening? Explain.
  + Do you feel less fear of economic insecurity? Explain.
  + Are you finding your intuition guiding you in situations that used to baffle you? Explain.
  + Are you seeing the places that your HP is doing for you, what you could not do for yourself? Explain.

FILL OUT THE INVENTORY ACTION FORM FOR MAKING AMENDS AND BEGIN MAKING AMENDS (you can download it from the MAA website)

* + Who are you going to be accountable to for following up with your amends?
  + How are you going to complete them in a timely way?
  + How are you going to continue to make "living amends" in your life?

**"**HOW TO MAKE CLEAN AMENDS" SCRIPT:

When making a direct amend*s* you can say something like this:

A. Here's what I have done wrong

B. I apologize for this, or can you forgive me?

C. What can I do to make this right?

D. Is there anything else I have done to harm you that you want to discuss?

* + - How has using this amends script helped you in making amends? Explain.

Weeks 4-5

“In thinking about our day, we may face indecision. We may not be able to determine which course to take. Here we ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought or a decision. We relax and take it easy. We don’t struggle. We are often surprised how the right answers come after we have tried this for a while.”

* + How do you know when you are receiving inspiration?
  + How do you relax, take it easy and stop struggling?

Follow through with the following exercise:

Forgiveness Letter Exercise

for BB2B

Part 1 Writing the Letter

Write a letter to yourself from someone who you feel has hurt you. Write everything you wish they would say to you. In this letter they apologize and ask you forgiveness, naming exactly what they did that hurt you.

Part 2 Reading the letter

Read you letter to your sponsor or BB2B action partner. Your Sponsor/partner will ask the following questions:

Witness Questions for the Forgiveness Letter

Sponsor/Action Partner: Please read the letter just as you wrote it.

(You read your letter)

* 1. How does it feel to hear this apology?
  2. In this situation, what roles did you cast the other person in?
  3. What roles did you cast yourself in?
  4. What roles did the other person cast you in?
  5. As far as you can observe, what roles did the other cast themselves in?

Sponsor/Action Partner: Now read the letter again and this time read it as if this is the apology letter YOU wrote to THEM .

(You read the letter again turning it around to the "other")

Sponsor/Action Partner asks:

* 1. How does it feel to give this apology?
  2. As you reread it did you notice if you still cast the other person in the same role as before?
  3. Did you notice if you were in the same role you cast yourself.
  4. Does this situation look any different to you from this perspective?

Sponsor/Action Partner: Now read the letter again and this time read it as if this apology letter is a letter YOU wrote to YOURSELF. Please slow it down so you can really FEEL your apology.

(You read the letter turning it around to themselves)

Sponsor/Action Partner asks:

* 1. How does it feel to give this apology to yourself?
  2. As you reread it did you notice any recurring roles that you have played out with yourself
  3. Did you notice more deeply how you have limited yourself with these roles?
  4. Does this situation look any different to you from this perspective?

What roles can you recast the other person in that would serve you both?

What roles can you recast yourself in that would serve you, the other person, and the world.