

## **A SPIRITUAL AXIOM**

*It is a spiritual axiom that every time we are disturbed, no matter what the cause, there is something wrong with us. — TWELVE STEPS AND TWELVE TRADITIONS, p. 90*

I never truly understood the Tenth Step's spiritual axiom until I had the following experience. I was sitting in my bedroom, reading into the wee hours, when suddenly I heard my dogs barking in the back yard. My neighbors frown on this kind of disturbance so, with mixed feelings of anger and shame, as well as fear of my neighbors' disapproval, I immediately called in my dogs. Several weeks later the exact situation repeated itself but this time, because I was feeling more at peace with myself, I was able to accept the situation—dogs will bark—and I calmly called in the dogs. Both incidents taught me that when a person experiences nearly identical events and reacts two different ways, then it is not the event which is of prime importance, but the person's spiritual condition. Feelings come from inside, not from outward circumstances. When my spiritual condition is positive, I react positively.

*AA "Reflections" for October 9*

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## **FIXING ME, NOT YOU**

*"If somebody hurts us and we are sore, we are in the wrong also." — TWELVE STEPS AND TWELVE TRADITIONS, p. 90*

What a freedom I felt when this passage was pointed out to me! Suddenly I saw that I could do something about my anger, I could fix me, instead of trying to fix them. I believe that there are no exceptions to the axiom. **When I am angry, my anger is always self-centered.** I must keep reminding myself that I am human, that I am doing the best I can, even when that best is sometimes poor. So I ask God to remove my anger and truly set me free.

*AA "Reflections" for October 10*

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## **YESTERDAY'S BAGGAGE**

For the wise have always known that no one can make much of his life until self-searching becomes a regular habit, until he is able to admit and accept what he finds, and until he patiently and persistently tries to correct what is wrong.

*12 Steps and 12 Traditions, page 88*

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## **ASSETS OR LIABILITIES?**

Self-will and perfectionism is what I showed up with. And I thought those were assets, not liabilities! Come to find out, they would no longer serve me if I were to stay sober and eventually have some measurable level of inner peace. Open-mindedness and acceptance would be the new order (of the day).

-- Del B.

"If you want to be miserable, think about yourself, about what you want, what you like, what respect people out to pay you, and what people think of you."

-- Charles Kingsley (chaplain to Queen Victoria)

**Five Consistent Messages:** Rohr has identified five consistent messages that male initiation rituals traditionally convey:

- Life is hard.
- You are not important.
- Your life is not about you.
- You are not in control.
- You are going to die.

These messages are meant to ground the individual in reality, humility, and a sense of interconnectedness with the broader community and world.

X → → "Entitlement is the enemy of gratitude." → →

The Four Initiations:

- Warrior
- Wise Man
- Lover
- Father (King)

## CHARACTER DEFECTS & ASSETS

SELF-WILL  
SELF-CONSCIOUS  
SELF-CENTERED

GOD'S WILL  
GOD-CONSCIOUS  
GOD-CENTERED

Selfish  
Self-seeking  
Fearful  
Full of doubt, fear  
Dishonest  
Inconsiderate

Selfless  
Interested in others  
Courageous  
Full of faith, love  
Honest  
Considerate

Proud  
Lustful  
Angry  
Greedy  
Gluttonous  
Envious  
Slothful, Lazy

Humble  
Loving, caring for others  
Calm  
Generous  
Moderate  
Grateful  
Active, industrious

Impatient  
Intolerant  
Resentful  
Hateful  
Harmful  
Self-important  
Self-condemning  
Suspicious  
Demanding  
Defensive  
Controlling  
Critical

Patient  
Tolerant, understanding  
Forgiving  
Loving, concerned for others  
Helpful  
Modest  
Self-forgiving  
Trusting  
Accepting  
Open to criticism, change  
Empowering  
Charitable

## **Humility Prayer**

God, I am far too often influenced by what others think of me. I am always pretending to be either richer or smarter or nicer than I really am. Please prevent me from trying to attract attention. Don't let me gloat over praise on one hand or be discouraged by criticism on the other. Nor let me waste time weaving imaginary situations in which the most heroic, charming, witty person present is myself. Show me how to be humble of heart, like you.