

How to Take A DAILY MORAL INVENTORY

It is required that you reserve a time for prayer and meditation early in the day, before going to work or to your day's activities. You will find that establishing this discipline will set the course of your entire day. Because we want to help you develop the habit of spending time alone with the Lord each morning, we guard this time for you by requiring that all radios, etc., be turned off during this time, and no projects be started until after Quiet Time. If you begin each day in communion with God, you can walk through the day with the confidence of His presence.

To make this time more meaningful, we suggest that you select a quiet, secluded place where you can be free of distraction, and can concentrate fully. Jesus often withdrew from the crowds to refresh Himself spiritually, and we too, if we want to grow in His likeness, must make the same strategic withdrawal. We need to select a spot that will become our 'prayer closet' where we can shut out the world for a time of communion with Him.

To avoid spending the time in idle daydreaming, we offer this simple structure to make your prayer time more meaningful. To encourage you to take full advantage of this method, we have made the Daily Moral Inventory (D.M.I.) a requirement for advancement and continuation in the The ARC of Alva Program. We suggest that you take time in the morning during your Quiet Time to reflect on yesterday and take your daily Moral Inventory. Then bathe the negatives in prayer throughout the day.

1. TAKE YOUR DAILY MORAL INVENTORY

The D.M.I. is designed to help you identify twenty negative and twenty positive attitudes that you may have expressed through your thoughts and behavior yesterday. It is a mirror to help you get in touch with your own soul; and it will, if you will do it honestly, give you valuable insights into the attitudes that motivate your actions. The Bible says, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." (Proverbs 23:7).

There are two basic aspects in the regeneration process:

- (1). Physical detoxification from addictive substances; and
- (2). Renewing the mind from mental and emotional contamination.

The first part is the easiest, and that part should already have been completed before you arrive here. It is a fact that, although withdrawal is physically uncomfortable, the body will, when we quit ingesting alcohol and drugs, slowly return to normal functioning. The second part is a process that will require your energies and attention for the rest of your life. The "stinking thinking" and the "damaged emotions" that accompany alcoholism and drug addiction do not clear our minds when we merely get sober. **Denial** (a mental defense mechanism that protects the addict from facing reality by blocking knowledge from his/her awareness) is one of the most dangerous symptoms of the disease of alcoholism and/or drug addiction. It impairs judgement or "insight" and results in self-delusions which keeps the addict locked into an increasing pattern of destruction. **Projection** (blaming the other people for my problems and attitudes) causes the addict to always see his problems "out there" in the actions and failures of others rather than "inward" negative attitudes of his own that produce bad behavior.

Most of us mistakenly try the “geographic cure” of moving away from people, problems, and places that “cause us to drink or drug excessively” rather than search our hearts to find the real roots of our problem.

“Today is the first day of the rest of your life,” so don’t mess it up by allowing yesterday’s problems to invade your serenity today. That is why we suggest that you do the Daily Moral Inventory (D.M.I.) In the evening. Look at your actions and attitudes from the perspective of distance (24 hours). Do not try to go back any further than that. You cannot change the past, but you can keep it from contaminating your present and future. Be careful to look more at your own reactions and attitudes than other people’s failures and problems. Remember the **BOMBSHELL THEORY**:



- 1. I cannot change other people by direct action*
- 2. I can only change myself.*
- 3. Others have a tendency to change in reaction to my change.*

Start your D.M.I. by marking column 1, top to bottom, with either an **X** to indicate a negative attitude or a **✓** to identify a positive attitude. The top columns do not represent calendar days, just the sequence of your inventory. Refer to the D.M.I. Commentary if you do not understand any of the attitudes in the list.

B. PRAY ABOUT YOUR D.M.I. INSIGHTS

So much of our prayer life is ineffective because we “pray amiss.” (James 4:3) We miss the target! Pray specifically that the Holy Spirit will deal directly with the negative attitudes that the D.M.I. has revealed. Remember “**prayer changes us – we change things.**” The following prayer steps will help to lead you into His presence:

1. Relax and Detach

We can only begin the inward journey of prayer by detaching our attention from external distractions. This is not easy because we are so conditioned to outside stimuli that we have to discipline ourselves to “turn off” outside noises and “tune in” the voice of the Holy Spirit. It is helpful to sit in a comfortable position and consciously relax all parts of your body.

2. Focus your attention on your inward journey.

Imagine yourself walking slowly down a set of stairs leading to a basement sanctuary where Jesus awaits you. He is always present in the heart of the born-again believer, but we are not always “present” to Him. Our attention is more often on the “temporal things that are seen than on the eternal things which are not seen.” (II Cor. 4:18) Ask the Holy Spirit to escort you into His “presence.” Imagine yourself sitting in a chair talking face to face with Jesus. “Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1) “He that comes to God must first believe that He exists and that He will reward those who diligently seek after Him.” (Hebrews 11:6)

3. Pray - converse with Jesus.

He is not only our Savior, but also our counselor and guide. He is delighted to give direction to His children and forgiveness to those who confess their sins. “If any man lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not: and it shall be given him.” (James 1:4) “If My people which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then shall I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins, and heal their land.” (II Chronicles 7:14)

C. KEEPING A JOURNAL

There is a section of your notebook set aside for keeping the copies of your daily Journal which records the insights gleaned from your Scripture Reading and prayer time. Be sure to date each entry. This is not to be a diary to record events from yesterday, but rather a journal to preserve the insights that God reveals to you about your character development and Christian walk. Be as specific as you can in recording the impressions that the Holy Spirit makes upon your heart. Use extra sheets of notebook paper to write these down if the form doesn’t allow you enough room.

This journal is not for public information. You are writing only for yourself to record your spiritual pilgrimage. When your counselor checks that you are doing your journals, they only check to see if they exist. They do not read them. If you faithfully take the time to work this exercise, it will be a tremendous tool to help you put into words the working of the Lord in your inner life, and your journal will become one of your most treasured possessions.

During your Quiet Time each morning, scan your D.M.I. carefully and meditate a few moments on the **X**’s that represent yesterday’s negative attitudes. See how they are interrelated, presenting you a vivid multifaceted reaction to yesterday’s events. Look beyond the offense of the problems caused by other people to see what attitudes were expressed in your response to other people’s behavior. What attitude “roots” were manifested in yesterday’s relationships?

Record your “insights” of how you see your life growing and developing through what happened to you yesterday.

D.M.I. COMMENTARY

SERENITY - Overlooking our own needs; and shifting the center of interest from ourselves, to concern for the needs of those around us.

SELF-PITY - Sulking, being moody and silent, using physical means to transmit feelings. Strong sense of not being liked. Feeling sorry for yourself. “P.L.O.M.” “Poor little ole me . . . everybody hates me . . . nobody loves me . . . I'm going out in the garden and eat worms.” (Read about Elijah under the juniper tree in I Kings 19:4 and about Peter’s fishing trip in John 21:3.)

Memory Verse: Philippians 2:4-7

“Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men.”



HUMILITY - Accepting our limitations and personal defects, without trying to justify them; having no false pride.

SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS - Excusing ourselves of any wrong behavior or attitudes, while condemning others for the very same things. We justify ourselves, and whitewash our true character to give people a better impression. We become “puffed up;” being “right” becomes a fetish. We will use any means to prevail over ideas which differ from our own. (Read Jesus' discourse on this subject in Matthew 23:1-23.)

Memory Verse: Romans 10:3

“For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”



SELF-VALUATION - Realizing who we are as God’s redeemed children. In our earthen vessels we hold a great treasure (II Corinthians 4:7), and we act like the “unique, unrepeatable miracles of God” that we really are

SELF-CONDEMNATION - Showing a low self-image by succumbing to false guilt, and declaring ourselves unfit or unworthy of God's grace. This is false humility. We use it to excuse ourselves from participation in spiritual growth. People who suffer from self-condemnation are not in love with themselves; rather, they are “in hate” with themselves.

Memory Verse: I Timothy 1:12-13

“And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me in the ministry; Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.”

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BEING A GIVER - Having the desire to "put in" more than we "take out." Being grateful for what we have received, and to the people through whom God gave it to us. "The world belongs to those who can pay for it with the precious coin of appreciation."

BEING A TAKER - Taking more than we give, in all of our relationships. Demanding instant gratification for all our needs or wants, and whining when others do not meet our expectations. Then, even when we are blessed with something, we don't truly appreciate it, or the person who gave it to us.

Memory Verse: Ephesians 5:18-20

"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ..."

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HONESTY - Being truthful, open, and frank. Genuine. Admission of alcoholism is the first step toward healing. Accepting responsibility for our actions, is the second step.

LYING - Not being truthful or trustworthy. Cheating. Telling un-truths or holding back parts of the whole story. Lying breeds fear; kills peace of mind; and separates us from God, ourselves, and others. Denial of alcoholism, and projection of blame, are the two most common forms of lying among alcoholics.

Memory Verse: Ephesians 4:25

"Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another."

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PATIENCE - Demonstrating a quiet, uncomplaining endurance, under distress or annoyance. Being tolerant, tender, and forbearing.

IMPATIENCE - Annoyance; because you don't get what you want, when you want it. An unwillingness to wait for something.

Memory Verse: Galatians 6:9

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

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GRATITUDE - Being grateful to God and other people for what we have, and where we are. Making do, and being content.

COMPLAINING - Continuously talking about the negative aspects of something we have no control over. Failure to practice the principles contained in the "Serenity Prayer."

Memory Verse: Philippians 4:11-13

"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ Jesus which strengtheneth me."

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FORGIVENESS - To pardon, or give up resentment, when someone has wronged us. To give up the right to get even. Jesus taught us that we would be forgiven in direct proportion to our willingness to forgive.

RESENTMENT - Having a feeling of bitterness, that forms a mental chain that binds us to the person or thing that we hate. Resentment is like a two-edged sword that wounds us more than it does others. Nothing will wreck our program of sobriety as quickly as resentment.

Memory Verse: Matthew 6:14-15

"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

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ADMITTANCE - The Realization that the disease of alcoholism will make it impossible for the recovering alcoholic to ever drink again. Admittance pushes out any possible thought that the alcoholic lifestyle was not so bad, and motivates the alcoholic to build a program into his life to prevent ever going back to his addiction.

DENIAL - Blinds the alcoholic to his own problems. It enables him to go through disaster after disaster and never learn that this is not a normal facet of life. Denial also allows the recovering alcoholic to harbor the mistaken idea that his previous life was not all that bad; and that maybe he will be that one exception to the rule, and be able to drink socially again.

Memory Verse: I John 1:8-10

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

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TRUST - Being able to believe and relax in the promises that have been made to us by God and others. Not trying to be a 'Lone Ranger' in the Body of Christ.

WORRY - The inability to trust God or men to do what they have promised. Failure to share the load with other members of the Body of Christ.

Memory Verse: Matthew 6:31-33

"Therefore take no thought saying What shall we drink? or Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For all of these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these other things shall be added unto you."

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WORKING THE PROGRAM - Realizing the life and death nature of rehabilitation and putting forth a determined effort to change. Trying to implement scriptural principles in all areas of our lives.

COMPLYING - Doing enough to get by, but not exerting any real effort to change. Doing only what is expected or required, but not having any self-motivation.

Memory Verse: Colossians 3:22-23

"Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men..."

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ACCEPTING RESPONSIBILITY - Being accountable for both my attitudes and my actions, and not being a "victim" of circumstances, environment, or other peoples' behavior. Realizing that I will never change "me" by blaming other people for my faults.

PROJECTION - A defense mechanism that excuses our own wrong behavior by accusing others for being the source of the problem. "If you didn't nag...I wouldn't drink." Our Great...Grandfather, Adam, taught this to the human race when he blamed his wife for his problem.

Memory Verse: Luke 15:17-19

"And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger: I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants."



DOING THINGS ON TIME - is actively working to accomplish tasks whether it be something small, such as writing a letter; or something larger, such as getting a job. It is being punctual and prepared.

PROCRASTINATION - is the thief of time. It is natural for everyone to have the following symptoms once in a while, but when they become chronic they cause real trouble:

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| 1) Lateness | 6) Dullness - mental, physical, & spiritual |
| 2) Putting things off | 7) Lack of growth or change |
| 3) Loafing | 8) Sloppiness |
| 4) Do-nothingness | 9) Passing the buck |
| 5) Shirking responsibility | 10) Apathy |

Memory Verse: Proverbs 6:6-11

Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.



BEING YOUR REAL SELF - Not worrying about what any other people think about you. Being honest and open in expressing inner feelings. Being transparent.

BEING PHONY - Trying to impress others. Making people think that you are something you are not, or that you know something that you do not know.

Memory Verse: Matthew 23:27-28

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites (play-actors): For ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."

POSITIVE THINKING - Knowing and trusting God, and our relationship to Him through Jesus. Believing that all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28)

NEGATIVE THINKING - Is consistently believing that bad things will happen; or that people will reject you because of real or imagined character defects.

Memory Verse: James 1:5-8

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.”



HIGH-MINDED, SPIRITUAL, CLEAN THINKING - Keeping our minds free from lust and immoral desires. Trying to keep our hearts fixed on Jesus.

VULGAR, IMMORAL, TRASHY THINKING - Dwelling on memories of past immoralities or fantasies. Allowing lust to control our minds and to hinder our relationships with God. Refusal to allow God to become Lord of our sexuality. Reprobate mind. (Romans 1:28-31)

Memory Verse: Isaiah 26:3

“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.”

Ephesians 4:29

“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”



ACCEPTING FORGIVENESS - Believing that God will keep His promises regarding repentance of sin.

FALSE GUILT ABOUT THE PAST - Believing the devil’s lies; that our sins are just too much for God to be able to forgive. Satan has two favorite lies to deceive us with; First, he tells us that we are so much better than all the hypocrites who go to church on Sunday; and we fall into self-righteousness. Secondly, when our sins get so bad that we can’t ignore them anymore, he then tells us that we have gone too far, and have committed the unpardonable sin!

Memory Verse: Philippians 3:13-14

“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

TEMPERANCE Balance in the consumption of food, sweets, or drinks. Of course, temperance is impossible **for** the alcoholic, when it comes to alcohol or drugs.

GLUTTONY - Compulsive overeating and over-indulging. Consistently eating more food than we need, to satisfy normal hunger needs.

Memory Verse: Proverbs 23:21

"For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags."

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CONCENTRATION - Keeping your mind and body together in the present, and working on the life-controlling problems that brought you down in the first place. Working the program every day.

HEAD AND BUTT DISEASE - Daydreaming; living in a fantasy world of the future, or reliving the unchangeable events of the past.

Memory Verse: Proverbs 4:23

"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

James 1:8

"A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."

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COMMUNION WITH GOD - Realizing that God loves you and desires a close relationship with you all day, every day.

FORGETTING GOD - Going through the day, with hardly a thought of the living God that brought you here and desires a relationship with you.

Memory Verse: I John 1:3

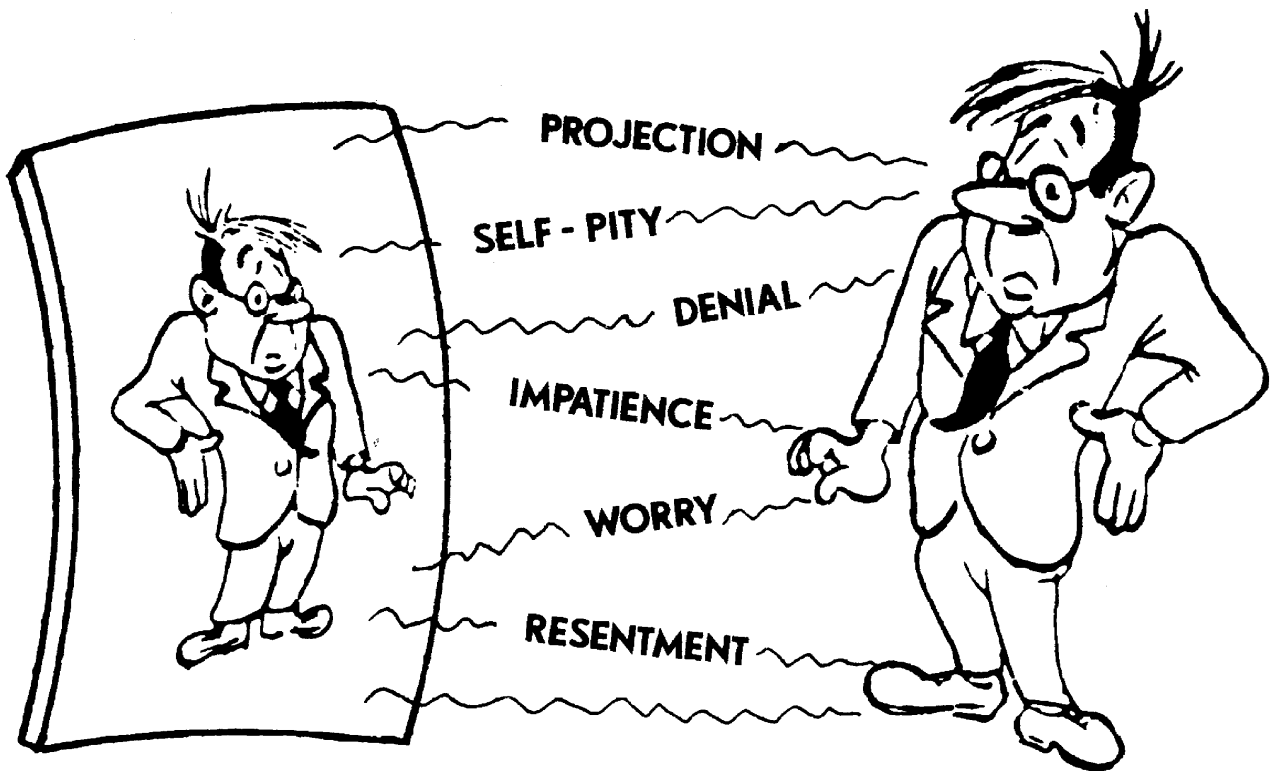
"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

A fault recognized is half corrected.

The ARC of Alva

An ARC of Advent Recovery Ministries, Inc.

Instructions and Commentary on the DAILY MORAL INVENTORY



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