

Mastering Recovery

A Newsletter on Long-Term Sobriety



#12-- September 22, 2021

Why Me? A Question of Purpose

Why not you? A question of meaning.

What I'm Thinking

Why me?

We often use that as a shortcut to whining. It often stands for "Why is this happening to ME?" Let's put another word into the thinking:

Acceptance.

"Why me?" is not a statement of acceptance.

A mentor/coach of mine likes to ask the question, "What would you go back and tell yourself before all this happened. I know what he's getting at, but in some situations, it is not a helpful starting point question. What would I say to my old self, the one before my substance use disorder? Would I want to tell that 18-year old, don't do that? Would I insist that he shouldn't touch alcohol or start smoking?

Part of me says, "Hell, yeah! Stay away from all that and you'll be better off."

But how true might that have been for me is an open question. Why? Because I absolutely am excited by what has happened to me in the past 30-plus years of recovery. I would not have had the life I have lived without having first been diagnosed with a substance use disorder. [Of course if I were speaking to someone in the here and now I would say they shouldn't start, but it's easier to try to change the future than the past.]

Of course, I did not face some of the deeper and most difficult consequences of an SUD. But the truth of it is often in the question of acceptance. What I found in the diagnosis and treatment was purpose for who I am; meaning for what I can do because I am a person who has been diagnosed with the disease. once I accepted that I was- and will always be a recovering addict/alcoholic, the question is now, what am I going to do as a result of that.

It may take time- even years- to understand and accept things, but until I can do that, my life will not easily find a meaning.



Facing Challenges - Building Recovery

What can you do when faced with difficult circumstances?

- Start again with the "Why me?" question.

Now get rid of the "whine." None of that. Ask it with a sense of wonder:

- "Hmm. I wonder why this is happening in my life? What might I learn from it?"

A different tone of voice helps. So does shifting the question even more.

- "Can I find some meaning or purpose in this?"

Now, let's push the envelope a little.

- "Why NOT you?"

Dig around that one a little bit. Uncomfortable? Uncertain? In many situations you will feel that way. We don't have to like what's happening, or even approve of it, in order to move forward. Let's pivot a little more toward acceptance with the questions.

- What can I learn from this?

Sometime the only answer is acceptance, which can be an endless cycle of self-judgment. So, instead, ask a different question.

- What resources and skills do I have that can be helpful in addressing this?

Now one more step from that to purpose.

- How can I use these, along with my own experiences, to help others?

You might want to use this as a template to journal when face with times like that.

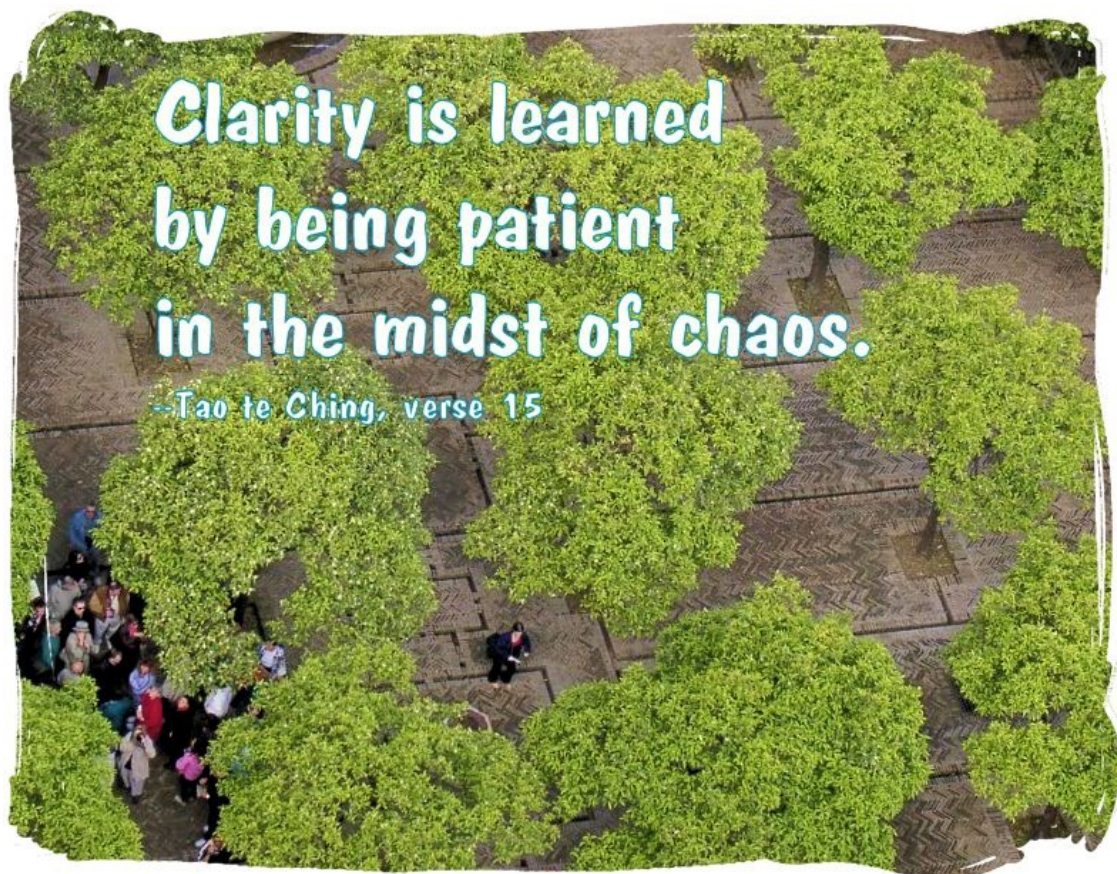
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Picture and Quote of the Week



Clarity

One person, sitting alone, studying, quiet, being patient.

Have You Seen This?

"We do not have the luxury of a negative thought." Jackie Monahan quotes the AA Big Book in an article on The Fix website from March. With all our talk of acceptance today, it's a good reminder that sobriety is more than just not using.

[The Fix website](#)

Tools and Resources

Radical Acceptance: Embracing Your Life With the Heart of a Buddha

by Tara Brach

The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are

by Brene Brown

WORKBOOK for The Gifts of Imperfection

by Brene Brown

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Thank you for the support!

## Book Update

The book is almost ready. It will be published this weekend with the "official" launch scheduled for October 3.

I can't stay calm--- **YAY!**

Both the Kindle book and the paperback contain a link to a free PDF journal. The journal was written to help people start their mastering recovery journey. It is three-weeks of prompts and suggestions for your journal time.

Launch Team members will get the information on Friday. All newsletter subscribers will get the information and updates in the next newsletter.

[You can still join the Launch Team here.](#)

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