

“The past is never dead. It’s not even past” (Wm. Faulkner). Therapist: “Events aren’t locked away in a place we call the past. They send waves through time and we’re riding those waves.”

Take Pentecost. 120 disciples in a room this size, hiding behind locked doors for weeks after the lynching of their rabbi, followed by rumors of resurrection (which placed them in greater danger)

When Spirit came, a ruckus ensued—and this timid band found themselves thrust from private to public sphere. As Jesus foretold, “What is whispered in secret will be shouted from the rooftops!”

Adey Wassink, told me about visit to the new lynching memorial in Montgomery. Adey grew up in Skokie, Ill., holocaust survivors.

Pentecost happened in immediate wake of a scapegoating event.

Key move when people witness scapegoating: from **private** to **public** support. Our gay members know private assurance you get from Uncle Ed, “You know I totally support you” means little when Uncle ED not willing to make his support known to rest of family.

Spirit came on this gathering of privately supportive but publicly silent Uncles...the Spirit of Pure Love, who drives out fear, and they went private to public, which also meant unreal to real.

Whenever the risen Jesus came to the early disciples he said either ***Peace be with you!*** or ***Don’t be afraid....***Mark of the Spirit

Were in a series called The 12 Steps for Anyone. The spirituality of the 12 Steps is one of the waves created by Pentecost and this movement through and beyond our fears into freedom.

So with the surrender to our Higher Power in Steps 1-3, the Spirit comes, and the process of driving out fear begins.

In Steps 4-9 we are able to face ourselves, name things, tell them to another trustworthy human being...by Step 9, make amends to those we harmed, when to do so doesn't cause further harm—

Today we add another move of the Spirit through and beyond fear **STEP TEN: Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.**

Surely you've done this as I have: You have some disorderly-chaotic part of your life—lets keep it simple and call it a messy basement, or desktop. We procrastinate cleaning it up because it's going to take hours, maybe days. It gets worse, we procrastinate more. Then our loved ones does an “intervention”—like my son did on me when we saw my file-littered desktop (dad! mess is sucking battery, you gotta do something!)

We do our searching and fearless moral inventory—he's right!—and we say so, and eventually put in the time to deal with it in a one time surge of effort. It feels so good! We show our friends!

What comes next in this story? We stop there. We see that neat desktop and start piling things on again.

Step 9 is surge—hours/day cleaning your basement run-amok.

In gospel, example is Zacchaeus (Heb. pure-innocent) tax collector. He scrambles up a tree (being a man of short stature) to see Jesus coming into Jericho. Surprisingly, Jesus sees him, names him, and invites himself to dinner with Zacchaeus, scandalizing the devout.

After dinner, Zaccheus comes out to announce he is giving away half his wealth, and if he has defrauded anyone, he will make amends. Jesus says, “Surely the realm of God has come today!”

Zacchaeus was undergoing Step 9, making amends to the many people he had overcharged, as the tax collectors did. It takes a burst of loving divine energy to get us through a Step 9 situation.

(Note: it came with this dinner with Jesus, not a brow-beating)

Step 10 (Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it) is line 4 of Lord's Prayer.

1. *Our father in heaven holy is your name*
2. *Your kingdom come your will done on earth as in heaven.*
3. *Gives us today our daily bread*
4. *And forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us*

Line 4 is paired with line 3 because it's a daily practice.

So what might a daily practice look like? First a little background.

Thing 1: The Importance of Regard

For years, big focus on teaching “people skills”- how to listen, using “I messages” not asking “Why questions” etc.

Turns out: hard to improve relationships by improving “people skills.” We don't want people using their people skills on us. We want people who care about us, who have regard for us.

Verb “**to regard**” = *to consider or think of (someone or something) in a specified way.*

Noun “**regard**” = *attention to or concern for someone/thing*

What really matters is not our people skills, per se, but how we regard the people we interact with. What's the state of our heart toward them? Resentful? Envious? Judging? Contemptuous? Kind? Loving? Merciful? Understanding?

Think of regard as the pig and people skills as lipstick we slap on the pig.

Thing 2: AA Fear Slogans

FEAR = Frustration, Ego, Anger, Resentment

Courage is fear that has said its prayers.

Let put Thing 1 and Thing 2 together with an example: Debra Garcia Wagner, one of our “kid whisperer” Sunday School teachers

If I could just brag a minute: Debra has a bag of tricks, methods, people skills, but what she really has is regard for kids.

Debra trained in Waldorf method—nighttime practice with two features 1. walk through the day remembering events of the day from beginning to end or end to beginning 2. As you do that, call to mind each student with attention to their gifts and their needs—to regard them lovingly

Suggest incorporating this practice into your night prayers.

Have a little structure: TDH Compline or Simpler (Sarum Prayer + Lord's Prayer); notebook and pen on nightstand.

Side note: *Sarum Prayer* (God be in my head, eyes, mouth, heart, end) is a Pentecostal prayer (Come, Spirit on, into, through me)

Say your prayers, then walk thru events of the day using the lens of gratitude, positive regard, mercy. (Regard others as you would want to be regarded by them)

Recall the events of the day and the people you encountered through the day, using the lens gratitude (being thankful for blessings) love (or kindness) and mercy.

While you're doing that, you may realize you were filled with resentment or envy or some negative regard for person – note that without judging yourself, make an intention to amend that when possible (jot a note in your notebook)

Do this with kindness toward yourself as well as much as toward the other people you encounter. Not brow beating.

What casts out fear is not aggression. It's not force.

What casts out fear is love. Fear tightens us up. Love relaxes us.

QUIET REFLECTION

Review, then walk through with verbal prompts.

First, employ quietly-Pentecostal *Sarum Prayer* (together, then 2X quietly to yourself)

God be in my head and in my understanding

God be in my eyes an in my looking

God be in my mouth and in my speaking

God be in my heart and in my thinking

God be at my end and at my departing.

Then regard the people you have interacted with today already through the lens of gratitude, love (warm regard), mercy.

Remember to regard yourself in the same way as you do this.

Then add person to your left and the person to your right and the person directly in front of you (don't need to know their names)

Add anyone you anticipate interacting with later in the day.

Add anyone important to you that you won't be seeing.