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7 WAYS TO FOCUS YOUR RECOVERY DURING A PANDEMIC

1. MINDSET

TRULY, "thoughts are things," and powerful things at that, when they are mixed with definiteness of purpose, persistence, and a BURNING DESIRE for their translation into riches, or other material objects. – Napoleon Hill

- A. MOST important to recovery
- B. Know your WHY and the HOW will follow.
 - i. Your WHY needs to be focused around you and NOT someone else or for someone else.
- C. Meditate, Pray, Sit Criss-Cross Applesauce
 - i. Do whatever you need to do collect your own thoughts and goals
- D. Visualize Visualize Visualize!
 - i. Nearly all in the professional sports world do this. They visualize themselves winning. They see themselves being 1st.
 - ii. There is a reason why ALL boxers and MMA fights shadowbox and call themselves the best.
- E. ALWAYS Think Positive.
 - i. "Really, can you always think positive?" See, we are already trained to think negative. Yes you can focus your mind to shift negatives into positives.
 - ii. Change Talk – Use Recovery Positive words. (KnowTheOfacts.org)
 - a. *Addict, junkie, user, druggie to Person with opioid use disorder*
 - b. *Drug habit, drinking habit to Disease*
 - c. *Addict, Ex-addict to Person living in recovery*
 - d. *Hooked to Substance dependent*
 - e. *Stayed clean to Maintained recovery*
 - iii. Controversial but I personally have stopped calling myself an addict.
 - iv. Find something more empowering to identify as. "I am a dedicated father who chooses to show up for myself, my wife, my children and my community.

2. PLANNING

- A. Define EXACTLY where you internally currently are and where you want to be.
- B. What do you need to do or remove to get there. (This is Organic)
- C. Write down the steps you need to take, goals you need to accomplish, and future projections.
 - i. Remember one step at a time. People quit when they don't drop 20 pounds after dieting for a short time. How about celebrating losing 1 pound and allow yourself to see success before moving on to the next pound.
 - ii. Measurable and digestible goal. Make them attainable.
 - iii. See yourself succeeding. Project and focus on success for today and the future.

3. BREATH!

- A. Breathing is everything. It literally gives you life yet is usually the last thing on someone's mind and taken for granted.
- B. You can do this at anytime, anywhere, at ZERO cost to you.
- C. Focused breathing, like "box breathing", is highly effective in helping to control cravings or shifting focus.
 - i. "To begin the practice, expel all of the air from your chest. Keep your lungs empty for a four-count hold. Then, perform your inhalation through the nose for four counts. Hold the air in your lungs for a four-count hold. When you hold your breath, do not clamp down and create back pressure. Rather, maintain an expansive, open feeling even though you are not inhaling. When ready, release the hold and exhale smoothly through your nose for four counts. This is one circuit of the box-breathing practice." – Mark Divine, U.S. Navy SEAL and founder of SEALFIT.

4. WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU THINKING?

- A. We do have control of what we feed our minds.
- B. What you focus on will become your reality.
 - i. Constantly thinking negative about yourself and others does not lead to happiness in life.
- C. What you say/think matters
 - i. "I am a no good, lying, cheating alcoholic who gets what I want. Therefore I am grateful to be sober today taking it one day at a time." OR "I am new and I am

unique. I have purpose and direction. I cannot change the past therefore I get to show up for today.”

5. FORGIVENESS/GRACE

- A. But really forgive yourself and not just say it.
- B. Allow yourself the grace to make mistakes so you can learn from them.
 - i. I always say if I’m going to fail at something then I want to fail fast.
 - ii. The faster I fail the faster I get to learning and growing from my mistakes.

6. DELIBERATE SHIFT IN LIFE

- A. We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them. – Albert Einstein
 - i. We have to create a new way of solving the problem or our “addictions”.
 - 1. *“I’ve been trying it on my own but keep relapsing.”*
 - 2. *“I keep coming back to my meetings but I cannot stop using.”*
 - ii. We must shift our minds and discover a new way to solve the areas in our lives that we identify as problematic.

I realized that though AA meetings work for so many people they simply are not helping me. And I’m honestly okay with that. Once I opened myself to other options I found a whole new life that I didn’t know existed.

7. OPENNESS

- A. Communication with yourself and others is vital.
 - i. A simple phone call can go a long way
 - ii. Communication connects us and brings understanding
- B. Sometimes others can see what we cannot in ourselves.
 - i. This is why it is so important to not take on recovery alone.
- C. Even if it hurts to hear and face we can repair and grow.