

## Yom Kippur: *Readings and prayers* High Holiday Addiction Recovery Guide

### Recovery Ashamnu

*During the High Holidays, there is a custom of collectively confessing our wrongdoings. The tradition is a form of “searching and fearless moral inventory” (Step 4 of the 12 Step programs) of ourselves as a collective people and community. The traditional Hebrew text follows the order of the Hebrew alphabet and offers an expression of the nature of our wrongs for each letter of the alphabet. Those who are able, stand, and we collectively recite and admit to God, to ourselves, and to our community the nature of our wrongs. Below is an adapted version of the communal confession to help us reflect on missing the mark in recovery.*

Our God and Higher Power of our ancestors,  
Let our prayer come before You  
And do not ignore our appeal,  
For we are not so self-possessed, brazen,  
and stiff-necked to say to you,  
*Adonai*, our God and Higher Power of our ancestors,  
We are righteous and have not missed the mark.  
But, indeed, we and our ancestors have missed the mark:  
We acted ambivalently,  
We bottled up emotions,  
We compared instead of identified,  
We lived a double life,  
We acted evasively,  
We were focusing on other people’s problems,  
We were going to meetings, but not sharing,  
We were in high-risk situations,  
We isolated,  
We judged,  
We kept taking someone else’s inventory,  
We looked for relapse opportunities,  
We minimized the consequences of past use,  
We neglected our commitments,  
We overthought,  
We pursued perfection instead of progress,  
We quit prioritizing healthy eating and sleeping habits,  
We held resentments,  
We stopped doing the healthy things that contribute to our recovery,  
We didn’t monitor our urges,  
We forgot what the Voice of Addiction sounds like, because it’s easy to forget,  
We didn’t work our program,  
We were zealots for our way of recovery and denied the recovery of others.

—Rabbi Rob Jury PhD CRADC

### ***Vidui for Addiction Recovery***

We would like to think that we can do it on our own, but we can't. How many times have we said "I don't need you. I don't need anyone"—to those we have pushed away? For what? An extra boost? Another drink? Then we find ourselves alone to face who we are, what we have done. Broken, shattered—like the first set of Ten Commandment tablets. According to Jewish tradition, the second set was given on *Yom Kippur*. This time, Moses carved and God wrote, the results of human interaction with the Divine.

During *Yom Kippur*, we stand as a community to confess our shortcomings. The confessional prayer is said as "we." As we have found in recovery, there is spiritual strength in numbers. People healing together is itself a powerful form of atonement: To rebuild our lives, we begin with ourselves. But we can't go it alone. There are others who will help us find our way if we let them. When relationships are built on a firm foundation of sacred trust between people, they can't be broken. In community, in the shadow of the protective care of the *Shechinah*, God's mystical presence on earth, there is enough strength to carry us all.

*(From 100 Blessings Every Day: Daily Twelve Step Recovery Affirmations, Exercises for Personal Growth & Renewal Reflecting Seasons of the Jewish Year, by Rabbi Kerry M. Olitzky, p.11).*

### ***You stand here today***

“You stand here today...” —Deuteronomy 29:9. *Nitzavim* (standing). Before we start walking, we have to know where we are standing. When we do not take note of where we are standing, what is going on around us, and what the appropriate response to our current situation is, we can easily walk/go to a place that is not ours. In order to reach a destination, we have to know where we are starting from; to reach our proper place, we have to see where we are standing right now. Without knowing where we are standing and what we are standing for, each experience will produce a reaction rather than a response. A reaction is just that—acting in the same manner. A response is taking a breath and making an informed decision to do things differently and use our past learning/experience to have a new response this time.

- With respect to where you want to go with our life, are you standing now in a place that will help lead you or keep you in your proper place?
- If you know you are not in your proper place right now, do you have the road map to get there?
- How do you make your next action a response rather than a reaction?

(From *Finding Recovery and Yourself in Torah*, by Rabbi Mark Borovitz, p.344)