VISIONS in D.A.

By Alan K.

Hello, my name is Alan K., and I am a debtor. I have been in D.A. since October 1995 – 30 years. I am also the founder of the Saturday morning *12 Steps to Prosperity* D.A. meeting based in a suburb of Philadelphia PA, which started in 2000 as a face-to-face meeting, but has, since Covid, been transitioned into and is currently an online meeting.

In Debtors Anonymous visions may be thought of as the ability to form a clear and specific picture of what we want to do in life and what we want to obtain, create, achieve, or accomplish. It's knowing where we are going. Our visions are our mission, our dreams, and our goals as they have been revealed to us by our Higher Power.

When we work our DA program our visions can be written. When we work a program of recovery, promises and visions do come true in our lives. I love the following statement from the AA Big Book, pages 83-84:

> *We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone we can see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of usefulness and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in our selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook on life will change. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations that used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we cannot do for ourselves.*

But what is keeping us from being clear about our visions? Visions can be about financial stability, emotional peace, improved relationships. Visions can help us get from: "*I'll never be free from debt*" to "*I'm moving towards financial freedom."*

Why do we have so much difficulty coming up with a visions list?

You know most of us have been vague and unfocused about our money so it makes sense that we would be vague and unfocused about our goals and visions. We say things like: "*I have always wanted to study music*," or "*I want to go to New Zealand, maybe not right now but sometime.*" But then we never do anything about it. Why?

We come up with all kinds of excuses: *"I'm too busy." "It's too expensive." "I don't have time."* And that causes us to get frustrated and shove our visions and dreams aside.

What's missing from this picture? *Our Higher Power!*

The question is: How do we figure out what our visions are? Ask yourself : *"What do I really want?"* Most of us are so busy doing what we feel we must do rather than asking what we really want to do.

Visions are particularly important in our recovery, but we do need to take certain actions.

First, we must stop debting. When we debt we have no connection to our Higher Power.

Second, we must seek to know God's will for us through prayer and meditation and by working the 12 Steps of D.A. When we work the steps with our sponsor the blocks and restrictions are removed.

Third, we must use the tools that D.A. has given us to help us get the clarity that is needed and that will support our visions. For me, this means:

- Working with my sponsor about my needs, my ideas, and my feelings,
- Listening to other D.A. members share their experience, strength, and hope,
- Having pressure relief meetings,
- Following my action plan and spending plan,
- And being of service.

These actions will give us a foundation upon which to build our visions.

A bigger question is: Are there consequences to ignoring our visions? I would say yes! Not being true to ourselves might even be called "self-debting." We get involved with other people's lives and forget about our own. Doing this kills any connection to our Higher Power and threatens any chance of our visions coming true. With no Higher Power in our lives this could lead to a feeling of defeat or failure; and we know where that leads us: right back to debting.

So, what is our biggest challenge when creating visions? Creating and living our visions takes courage, because once we learn what we want to do and what our Higher Power's visions are for us – we then must do it and that could be scary!

We ask: "*If we follow our visions and our dreams, what will happen?"* Of course, we have no way of knowing what will happen when someone follows their visions, but what I know from my own experience is that by following my visions I have accomplished many remarkable things in my life.

Yep - I was scared at times. For example, moving from Chicago to Philadelphia with three small kids, a dog, and a truck full of stuff was scary, but I had a vision of doing it and we did it and my Higher Power got me through it.

Starting *12 Steps to Prosperity* meeting some twenty-five years ago: how do you start a meeting? So, I got together with someone who had done it. I did a lot of work with my sponsor. He had me write a vision for the meeting. I prayed, meditated, and asked my Higher Power to help me. I asked: "*Can you help me find a room?"* and I found a room! "*Can you help me to register this meeting?"* and I got the meeting registered and the meeting started! Sure, I had doubts when no one showed up the first couple of months, but my sponsor said: *"Keep following your heart."* I kept going back to the meeting and it low-and-behold, the meeting started to grow – that was Higher Power working - not me.

In the D.A. program we talk a lot about visions: our hopes, our dreams, and our goals for the future. If we are not in the habit of doing this, it is hard to imagine visions of what we truly want. We know what we should want but we do not express it. Sometimes responsibilities have required us to put our dreams and visions aside; but never addressing our visions is not meant to be a way of life.

Our disease tells us we must be servants to our debt and that we will never repay our debt. But the truth is we can dream and have visions; we can dedicate a portion of ourselves to our dreams and visions one day at a time - preparing the groundwork to start working our program.

Dreams and visions are by nature uncontrolled - going beyond the status quo into the possible. We need to think outside the box. When we allow our innermost hopes to surface, our visions can be formed. Things begin to become available.

When we suppress our dreams and visions, it forces our dreams and visions to be shut down and put on hold.

> *Our visions are our mission, our dreams, and our goals as they have been revealed to us by our Higher Power.*

Let me repeat that:

> *Our visions are our mission, our dreams, and our goals as they have been revealed to us by our Higher Power.*

Following our visions can lead us to a better life. We can obtain peace, joy, balance, self-worth, and love when we live our visions and God's will for us. We can also inspire others to do the same.

There are a number of things that you can do daily to help you get your visions started. Here are a few simple examples:

- My vision is to *blank* by *blank*: In other words, My vision is to learn French by June of 2025.
- To achieve my vision, I will take this small step today: I will register for French classes.
- I will allow myself a small amount of time today and every day to unfold my dreams, my visions, and to honor a new way of life.

These affirmations can really be an effective way of getting our brain and our thought processes around how to create visions.
Here are some other tips that might be of help.

- Remember to ask why you want certain things.
- Think about what you want, not about what you do not want.
- Give yourself permission to dream.
- Be creative - consider ideas that you might never have thought possible.
- Focus on your wishes, not on what others expect of you.

Here are a few suggested questions that you might want to ask yourself to start:

- What really matters to me in my life, not what should matter?
- What would I like to have more of in my life?
- What are my secret passions and dreams?
- What would bring more joy and happiness into my life?
- What do I want my relationships to be like?
- What qualities would I like to develop: what are my talents?
- What is special about me?
- What would I most like to accomplish?

Start exploring what some visions look like for you. Recovery from compulsive debting is rarely a straight path. Revisiting our visions list helps us to maintain a sense of direction and purpose. By developing clear, compelling visions and relying on the fellowship's support we can transform our relationship with money and reclaim our lives from the grip of debt. D.A. offers everyone that help.

I love this quote that a former member of the *12 Steps to Prosperity* meeting often recited - it is from the Big Book of AA, page 85:

> *What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition. Every day is a day when we must carry the vision of God's will into all our activities. "How can I best serve Thee - Thy will (not mine) be done."*

Get together with your sponsor and start working on your visions.

You will not regret it, and your program will grow from it.

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