

Lessons in Living

As Soon As (ASA)

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"As Soon As" is a principle we can use to encourage our family members and ourselves to be patient in wanting. It is abbreviated as ASA. It helps us keep activities and acquisitions in line. It helps satisfy our natural desire for more & more. Here are some examples for using ASA:

A child is shopping with his mother. The entire trip around the store is one round of begging and whining for a toy car. Knowing it is natural for children to want, the wise mother suggests, "You are paid a quarter a day to empty the trash. As soon as you save the \$5.00 you can buy the car yourself." By using ASA, the mother taught three character-building lessons to her son: 1) patience, 2) the value of a dollar, and 3) how to work and gain independence so he doesn't need to beg.

Are we struggling to get our children to practice their music? How about using ASA? "Sure you can go swimming with Cathy, ASA you practice." Having worked in music for over 50 years, I have seen the ASA principle work wonders. There were even some parents who paid their children money ASA they memorized a selection. And, do you think the students were glad or sad afterwards? Right, they were glad and so were their parents!

How can we use ASA for our own growth? Here are two ways I used ASA: 1) I told myself I could read the morning newspaper ASA I read my Scriptures. 2) I told myself I could break my monthly fast ASA I had fasted a full 24 hours. It is the way we feel afterwards that determines the worth of an activity, isn't it? It was after I read my Scriptures and after I fasted for 24 hours that my self-confidence soared. **Note:** *I tried ASA to get in the habit of eating a raw veggie before I ate sweets, but I was raised on after-school snacks of a rich chocolate cake that Mom had baked, or a case of Snickers Dad had put in the refrigerator. So, at 83, I am still working on it, ha!*

Using ASA helps us prioritize and keep "first things first." If there is a Happy Habit we wish to establish, why not have it follow one we have already mastered? For example, if we already have the happy habit of drinking a glass of water on arising, why not add the juice of a lemon to help make it a healthier one?

Using ASA develops Happy Habits. We are all creatures of habit, so why not cultivate happy ones? Once self-control, self-denial, and delayed gratification become happy habits, our lives will improve. **My Grandpa Allen used to say, "Anticipation is Sweeter Than Realization." It will be fine training for each of us to patiently bask in our sweet anticipations as we look forward to our realizations.**