



ALKI-LINE



TAKE ONE, IT'S FREE

The Area 11 A.A. Newsletter Vol. 27 No. 4 Aug. 2018 - Sep. 2018

The Opposite of Addiction is Connection

I recently had the honor of attending a fellow female member's one-year anniversary. It was one of the most powerful experiences I have ever had. This particular group happens to be predominantly men, most with quite a few years of sobriety. It is also a rather small group, from what I understand. When the meeting started with over 20 women in the room, and a good number of men, I knew something special was happening. The speaker was a woman whom I respect and love a great deal; her story and the collective conscious of all those women in the same room for the same purpose gave rise to an ethereal energy that was potent.

As the meeting went on, every woman that shared spoke of the beauty the celebrant had brought to their lives, how much the speaker's story touched them, and gave them a sense of belonging and hope. The power and bond was building among us and the women could feel it. It was evident in the sincerity and confidence expressed in which they shared, and the compassion and connection seen on their faces and in their body language. Incredibly, the same also happened for the men; it was an undeniable feeling for all of us! As for me, my heart was bursting with pride and joy!

After the meeting, as if subconsciously, the women began to form a circle and we started introducing ourselves. It was as if we had a string and we kept passing it around the circle and connecting everyone together. It was a thing of beauty. This network continues to operate in and out of the rooms to this day. We are united by our purpose, sisters in this life in sobriety that we now have.

The outpouring of support, love and hope is, unfortunately, not always evident in meetings. As women, as AA members, and as human beings, we need to be there for the other women in the room all the time. It is a most intimidating and terrifying room to walk into for everyone, but we can change that in an instant! A simple hello, acknowledgement and the offer of a phone number can make the difference in a newcomer's life. This, above all else, is what the AA program is all about. The opposite of addiction is connection.

—Kim C.

Lo opuesto a la adicción es la conexión

Recientemente tuve el honor de asistir al primer aniversario de una compañera. Fue una de las experiencias más poderosas que jamás había vivido. Este grupo en particular resulta estar compuesto predominantemente por hombres, la

mayoría con bastantes años de sobriedad. También es un grupo algo pequeño, según tengo entendido. Cuando la reunión comenzó con más de 20 mujeres en el salón, y una buena cantidad de hombres, yo supe que algo especial estaba sucediendo. La oradora era una mujer a quien yo respeto y quiero mucho; su historia y conciencia colectiva de todas aquellas mujeres en el mismo cuarto con el mismo propósito hizo que se elevara la energía etérea que era potente.

Mientras continuaba la reunión, cada mujer que compartió habló sobre la belleza que la persona siendo celebrada había traído a sus vidas, cuánto les había tocado la historia de la oradora, y que les dio un sentido de pertenecer y de esperanza. La fuerza y el vínculo se iban forjando entre todos nosotros y las mujeres podían sentirlo. Era evidente en la sinceridad y confianza expresada con la cual compartieron, y la compasión y conexión que se miraba en sus rostros y en su lenguaje corporal. Increíblemente lo mismo sucedió con los hombres también; ¡fue un sentimiento innegable para todos nosotros! ¡En cuanto a mí se refiere, mi corazón estaba estallando de orgullo y alegría!

Después de la reunión, casi subconscientemente las mujeres empezaron a formar un círculo y todas empezamos a presentarnos unas a las otras. Era como si hubiésemos tenido un gran hilo y simplemente seguíamos pasándolo en el círculo conectándonos todas juntas. Era una cosa de belleza. Esta era una red que estaría funcionando, hasta la fecha, dentro y fuera de los cuartos. Estamos unidas por nuestro propósito, hermanas en esta vida dentro de la sobriedad que ahora tenemos.

La efusión de apoyo, amor y esperanza desafortunadamente no siempre es evidente en las reuniones. Necesitamos, como mujeres, como miembros de A.A. y como seres humanos, estar allí siempre para las otras mujeres en el cuarto. ¡Para todos es el cuarto más intimidante y aterrador al cual se entra, pero nosotros podemos cambiar eso en un instante! Un simple saludo, reconocimiento y ofrecer un número de teléfono pude hacer la diferencia en la vida de una persona recién llegada. Esto, ante todo lo demás, es de lo que se trata el programa de AA Lo opuesto a la adicción es la conexión.

—Kim C.

How to reach AA:

866-STEPS12

Para ponerse en contacto con AA, llame:

855-ESPANCT

I am my Father's Daughter

12-step, 12-step that was the dance
Tried to teach me while he had the chance

Calm and quiet, he drew me near
"Dadisms" of wisdom I'd love to hear

"Believe in a God," "Love your mother"
He tried to guide me like no other

You see, I was like him and he like me
I was an apple who fell from that tree

Demons from his past, he did make peace
His children at his side, he passed with ease

Something he'd say with a look in his eye
But for the Grace of God, 'ere go I

With him gone, I lost my way
Only to resurface another day

Washed up from the storm, safe upon the shore
Words from my father heard beyond that door

I sat right down, so broken and alone
After my first visit, I knew I was at home

12-step, 12-step that is the dance
Ever so grateful I had a second chance

—Liz C., Newington

The Devil's Soldiers

All over the ground I see the Devil's empty soldiers. For some, it leaves them as empty as the bottles and cans. I see them everywhere: nips, half pints and cans. There is a lot more variety, but they are all still the Devil's soldiers. They are insidious, cunning, baffling and powerful. They do battle with the powerless. They win when they rob us of our dignity, our relationships and even our lives. We are powerless to stop even though we know it is ruining our lives. It works as a remover of jobs, families and possessions.

I go to meetings and see people struggling against the Devil. The answer is to surrender and stop struggling. The Devil is cunning, baffling and powerful and without help it is too much for us. As alcoholics, we admit to ourselves and others that we are powerless. We admit it openly. I am an alcoholic my name is the same as some of you. Trust that you will not use, no matter what, and go to a meeting. Maybe go every day, maybe twice or more, whatever it takes. I believe you can. You need to believe in a power greater than yourself. We all sit down in chairs and believe that they will hold us. Like sitting down, I need to believe that my Higher Power will hold me and love me and wants the best for me. Bring the body and the mind will follow. If I don't get AA, AA will make my drinking miserable. Come, come to, and come to believe that the Devil's soldiers are powerless as long as I follow the way of AA.

—Tim F., Meriden

Suggestions from 1987

As I celebrate my 31st year of sobriety, I find myself reflecting on the initial wisdom the old-timers shared with me that helped create a solid foundation in my recovery:

- √ The meeting starts at the Preamble; ends with the prayer.
- √ If you are late/need to leave early, no sharing.
- √ Always thank the speaker.
- √ Leaders lead; speakers speak.
- √ Take the cotton out of your ears and stick it in your mouth.
- √ Learn to listen; listen to learn.
- √ The man takes the drink; the drink takes the man.
- √ 90 meetings in 90 days; repeat.
- √ Get a sponsor; take suggestions; sit up front.
- √ Do service.
- √ Reach out to the newcomer.
- √ Women with the women; men with the men (two dead batteries won't charge a car!).
- √ Go to the same meetings so people get to know you. If you open up and share hey'll spot your slip before you do.
- √ Get to a step meeting weekly and work with your sponsor to develop new tools for living..
- √ Change or die.
- √ Keep it green.

Today, I am living a life beyond my wildest dreams. God bless and keep coming!

—Cathie P.

Faith

How do you get through each day if you don't pray?
I do believe in God!
I do believe he has a plan for me.
Some days it just does not feel like it.
How do I move forward? How do I seek his guidance and intervention?
I can pray, but am I praying?
Am I truly handing it over to God when I worry?

Lord, help me to hand it off to you and focus on one day at a time.
Focus for today.

—Shoveon, Meriden

I Need to Be Told What to Do

As a young man I always knew right from wrong, but for some reason I often chose to make the wrong decision. Being uncomfortable with living that way, I decided to turn my life over to football, and everything worked out. Why wouldn't it? I was told what school to go to, when to eat, when and what classes to take, and how to behave.

Then football was over. At 23 years old, I was angry to have my football life cut short due to injury. I then decided how to live. Ahh, the insanity! Then bam! 16 years later I was heading to rehab. I was on the brink of losing everything: my wife, my

kids, my career, and my home.

It was suggested that I go to AA and start doing the Steps. I found myself hung up on Step 3: make a decision to turn my will and life over to the care of God, as I understood him. Turn my will over?? Never.

How can I turn my will over to God? After all, it was my will that afforded me so much. I finished my degree, earned my Master's degree, bought a house, got married, etc. Even as I write this, I can feel my ego taking over. I should be dead from allowing my will to run my life. Can anyone say "Self-will run riot?" Then I realized, with the help of my sponsor and fellow AA's that my will wasn't working. It was all an act. I needed to "let go, or be dragged."

Finally, after being stuck on Step 3 for over a year, I made a decision to turn my will over. What a relief! After all, history has proven that I do much better when I follow directions. So now what? Can I just let go of everything? Of course not, but I know if I let go of what I can't control, practice kindness, be productive yet calm and pray I will be alright.

–Ray C.

Anonymous

I can hear the eggshells crack as my car pulls in the driveway.

The living room blind is carefully pulled back for a nosy. Is she steady, is she alert, can she put one foot in front of the other?

Now for the sniff test; ok not sure.

Start with the accusations.

I have become anonymous

No more "how are you?" or "hi sweetie pies" for me I have been reduced to an alcoholic.

Some days I wish there was a do-over button to do over the multiple interactions I have.

Some days I wish I had the courage to fight back harder but I don't.

I'm not fighting.

I'm sober and that's all that matters to me.

When I walk through the doors of AA I am not anonymous I am part of a club that gets it.

That knows the daily struggle, the daily balance, the daily prayers, the daily "stickwithitness" that Bill saw.

I am going to continue to fight because I'm not anonymous!

–Shoveon, Meriden

Heard in the Rooms...

"Give up. Clean up. Make up. Grow up."

"Let go of the outcome."

*"When you change 'I' to 'We',
Illness becomes Wellness."*

"AA works if you believe in God. AA works if you don't believe in God. AA does not work if you believe you are God."

Been There

Now, that spiritual seat
Where past and future meet
And seekers seek to be
In emotional harmony.

Noting mental focus within
In full control
Insane am I
Acting/reacting as a puppet
Struggling to grasp the helm of balance
To steer a positive course
Gather fewer days of self-praise.

Does joy wait within us all?
Feeling such an inner rush,
Happiness, even giddy delight.
When joy vanishes, where does it go?
Let me access it now
To savor the wow.

Random thoughts continue to spin
Not recalling where they've been
Resentments spring a danger flag
And repeated themes finally nag
On any given day
And reactions are in play
Best to watch what I say.

Then, at ten feet tall
Surely knowing it all
Now, in reflection recall
The ego shrinks.

Toys of my mind:
Anger –fear – resentment –lust
Play randomly on and on.
Serenity – peace – love and care
Options waiting patiently
To shine.

Unfortunately
Acceptance, the line between
Hardship and opportunity,
Is never plain to see.

–Tom T

Holiday Alkathons

For publication in the October/November edition of the Alkiline, please submit Alkathon information by

September 15, 2018

email: alki-line@ct-aa.org

NEW MEETING!

Atheists and Agnostics in Alcoholics Anonymous

Tuesday, 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM*
174 Providence Street (Rte. 171), Putnam
Next to Putnam Supermarket
*Meeting may run over if discussion merits

The purpose of this meeting is to maintain a tradition of free expression. Here, alcoholics may feel free to express any doubts or disbeliefs they may have, and to share their own personal form of spiritual experience, their search for it, or their rejection of it. Our only wish is to assure suffering alcoholics that they can find sobriety in AA without having to accept anyone else's beliefs, or having to deny their own.

ALL ARE WELCOME!

There is currently no coffee being provided and at the request of the host, no gluten products are to be brought into the building. There is ample off-street parking at the rear of the building.

Responsibility Pledge

I am responsible.
When anyone, anywhere
reaches out for help,
I want the hand of AA
always to be there.

And for that,
I am responsible!

Iced Tea

Sunlight and flowers
Added daylight hours
Smelling new cut grass
And lawnmower gas

—Tom T.

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Save The Date

Area 11 AA Round Up

August 25, 2018 — 8:00 am - 3:00 pm
First Baptist Church of Southington,
581 Meriden Avenue, Southington
Details & Registration:
www.ct-aa.org/new-and-events/area-11-round-up/

60th Annual Area 11 AA Convention

September 28 - 30, 2018
Red Lion Hotel, formerly The Radisson Hotel
100 Berlin Road, Cromwell
Details & Registration:
www.ct-aa.org/new-and-events/area-11-convention/

Connecticut State Conference of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous (CSCYPAA) XXXIII

November 23-25, 2018
Red Lion Hotel, formerly The Radisson Hotel
100 Berlin Road, Cromwell
Details & Registration:
<https://www.ct-aa.org/cscypaa/>

Visit www.ct-aa.org/new-and-events for more info.

We Want To Hear From You!

Share your stories, essays, articles, poetry, etc... with others through the Alki-Line.

We are accepting submissions of one page or less:

Email: alki-line@ct-aa.org

Mail: Alki-Line, P.O. Box 7060, Meriden, CT 06450

Hand material to a GSR

¡Queremos saber más de Usted!

Mándenos las historias personales, los ensayos, las opiniones, la poesía, etc... y entérenos más de usted en el Alki-Line.

Se puede entregar una página o menos de las historias a una de los siguiente:

Por el correos electrónicos: alki-line@ct-aa.org

Por el correos: Alki-Line, P.O. Box 7060, Meriden, CT 06450

O De mano: a su GSR or Representativo de Alki-Line

Alki-Line

This newsletter is by and for alcoholics; however, we review submissions by all interested in the AA program of recovery. Material may be edited for clarity and length. This newsletter and earlier issues can be downloaded at www.ct-aa.org.

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