



# ALKI-LINE



TAKE ONE, IT'S FREE

The Area 11 A.A. Newsletter Vol. 26 No. 3 Jun. - Jul. 2017

## The Turbulent Seas of Failure Break on The Tranquil Shores of Success

I am convinced that alcoholics need to go through intense suffering to change, and it is only through being tossed around in the deep, turbulent seas of addiction, that God had mercy and poured His Grace on me. I deserved a bath of molten lava and was given a refreshing pool of Grace. I was washed cleaner and stronger, knowing that my life was extracted for a purpose; one I choose to fulfill today, one moment at a time.

The essence of my growth came from a willingness to finally make a change for the better. Change comes with honesty and a mind that is open to the ever-changing world, but unattached to my old ideas and behaviors. The hardest part of recovery isn't moving forward, but having to say goodbye to the old fallen self with all its comfortable misery. However, as a result of the steps, I am unable to hold on to the old ways of deceiving myself, making change inevitable. Change for me came bearing gifts.

Never give up because there is always hope. I have recovered from a hopeless state of mind and body, allowing me to help others who may be in a state of hopelessness through continued failure. This disease is an equal opportunity destroyer. Life is the essence of the beauty and love of God, and you don't have to feel good or look good to do good. I wouldn't trade one moment of failure to see the success through the eyes of my true emerging authentic self. It is in this challenging journey that I discovered it has taken me a long time to become the person I want to be. Life is a classroom and we are all students and teachers at the same time with God in the center of it all.

—Linda B.

## Los mares turbulentos del fracaso se quebrantan sobre las costas tranquilas del éxito

Yo estoy convencida de que los alcohólicos necesitan pasar por un sufrimiento intenso para cambiar, y es solo por medio de los mares profundos y turbulentos al ser sacudidos entre las olas de la adicción, que Dios tuvo misericordia y derramó Su Gracia sobre mí. Yo merecía recibir un baño de lava fundida y recibí una piscina refrescante llena de Gracia. Fui bañada

quedando más limpia y fuerte, sabiendo que mi vida había sido extraído para algún propósito; uno que yo elijo cumplir hoy, un momento a la vez.

La esencia de mi crecimiento llegó de una disponibilidad de finalmente hacer algún cambio para el bien. El cambio viene con honestidad y una mente que está abierta ante el mundo siempre cambiante, pero atado a nada del pasado con mis viejas ideas y comportamientos. La parte más dura de la recuperación no es moverse hacia adelante, pero tener que decirle adiós a aquel ser caído con toda sus desgracias cómodas en las que se vive. No obstante, como resultado de los pasos, yo no puedo aferrarme a las antiguas formas de engañarme a mí misma, haciendo inevitable el cambio. El cambio para mí llegó trayendo regalos.

Nunca se den por vencidos porque siempre existe la esperanza. Yo me he recuperado de un estado mental y físico sin esperanzas, permitiéndome ayudar a otros que tal vez estén en un estado de desesperación pasando por un fracaso continuo. Esta enfermedad es una destructora con igualdad de oportunidades. La vida es la esencia de la belleza y el amor de Dios, y no tienen que sentirse bien o lucir bien para hacer el bien. Yo no cambiaría un momento de fracaso para ver el éxito a través de los ojos de mi verdadero ser auténtico que se emerge. Es en esta jornada desafiante que yo descubrí que me ha llevado a mí mucho tiempo en convertirme en la persona que yo quiero ser. La vida es un aula y todos nosotros somos los estudiantes y los maestros a la misma vez con Dios al centro de todo.

—Linda B.

## Forgiveness

Just as the body needs oxygen to live, the soul needs love to thrive. When I harbor resentments toward people, I impede my own ability to give and receive love. I become aware of anger and frustration surrounding my refusal to forgive. Other times, hurt and fear clog my heart and I don't even know it. God and AA allow me to practice forgiveness. I sweep away the debris of bitterness and resentment. I also release seemingly minor irritations that might have built up. As I let go, I see myself and others as one: love flows freely through my mind, body and spirit. I revel in the joy of forgiveness.

—Jim S., Waterbury

## Serenity

With clarity of Your  
presence near  
I walk thru my days  
without fear.

Your guiding hand always  
by my side  
I'm soaring with love  
and enjoying the ride.

Thank you, Lord, for this  
new lease on life  
The feeling of ease and  
peace without strife.

Into my life new people  
have come  
I can't believe the  
Things I've done.

I never thought that  
I'd be here  
Feeling more joy and  
peace year by year.

Praying inside this never  
goes away  
Always holding You close  
day by day.

So I'll stay by Your side  
dear Lord  
And always live by Your  
spoken word.

—Evelyn K.

## Nine O'Clock

It's nine o'clock on a Saturday and this for sure I know.

The alcohol and drugs rocked my very soul.

Just think of the many memories that contributed to the  
ruin of bodies and souls of those who come to the rooms.

I now realize that God and AA meetings are the best way to  
go.

So, whether a Saturday or any day just look up a meeting  
and go.

There you will find what you really need  
and ask God to help you let go.

Addictions have plagued my body and soul,  
but now I have freedom wherever I go.

You will hear many tell you so.

—Egg-head, District 7

## Time is a Wondrous, Beautiful Thing

There is something beautiful about age to me. With age comes wisdom, with age comes patience, and with age comes opportunity. But the one thing that I enjoy the most about growing up is the realization of time. I realize now, at 22, how precious life is. I am fortunate enough to come to this understanding at such a young age; however, not everyone my age is. Some people with years beyond my own might not even recognize it yet, and that's okay, for those people still have time. Time is a wondrous, beautiful thing. Despite how many years we have lived or how many mistakes we have made; there is still time to turn a new leaf, and begin again.

For a long time I struggled with the sense of time — past, present, and future. The past we cannot change, but it has brought us to this very moment in our lives now. My life up to this point has been challenging, but wonderful. There have been plenty of times I've sat alone in my room for a few days overthinking my mistakes. There have been other times I've gone for a drive without any destination, with only the company of the radio to clear my head. There have been countless times I would numb my pain using other forms of coping mechanisms that I'm not proud of. During those moments I spent alone focusing on my past, present, and future, I would overthink and feel pity for myself. Maybe if I didn't make one stupid mistake I wouldn't be where I am today. I would think how perhaps my future wouldn't be so affected by that one moment. What I didn't realize is that it's never been just one moment. I have had thousands of moments (good and bad) throughout my past that shaped me into the person I'm so very proud to be now. What is important is to realize that your past is your past for a reason. In order to accept who you *are*, you have to accept who you *were*.

Do not let your past define you, and I know more than anyone that it is easier said than done. Self-doubt and negative thoughts will carry on throughout your life and severely affect your present and future if you continuously reflect on them. We live in the now, the past is over and done with. Now is the time to appreciate life and the daily gifts it offers. Make the most of the day with productivity and kindness. "Every 60 seconds you spend upset is a minute of happiness you will never get back". I am done stressing about what I did and I am ready to begin going about each day with confidence about what I can do. How can I be the best version of me every day? How can I help others be the best version of themselves? I genuinely want to make a difference in this world. However, I can't save myself, my loved ones, and be Oprah all in one day.

Each day I am learning to accept the things I cannot change, and gaining courage to change the things I can. I can do whatever I set my mind to. I can't stress enough how important it is to never give up on yourself or your dreams. Never lose sight of what is truly important to you now, because when our minds are stuck in the past and future, we are not truly alive in the present.

Time is beautiful. Time is precious. It's taken me awhile to understand that time isn't just measured by clocks or calendars; time is measured by moments. I never used to take

into consideration how some moments in life don't happen twice. For a great while my mind was in a one way tunnel, and I wouldn't consider making the most of each opportunity I am faced with. I realize now that I might not get the chance for those opportunities again. The opportunity to love, to choose my words correctly, to forgive, to put 100% into everything that comes before me; this gives me all the more reason to make the most of each opportunity from here on out. It feels rewarding and humbling to come to these realizations.

Without voluntarily walking into my first meeting, I never would have gotten to this place in my life, and for that I am so grateful. I only hope more people will open their minds and their hearts, and see that time is one of the greatest things in life we are all given. As long as you want it for yourself, there will be time to make a change. No matter what, there is always going to be 24 hours in a day. Make the most of them.

—Kaylie J.

### **This Hole**

All my life I've been searching  
For something to fill this hole,  
This empty place inside of me,  
Its darkness, it held my soul.

It robbed me of my confidence.  
It took all of my self-respect.  
It filled my heart with sadness,  
And my soul cried from neglect.

I tried to fill the hole with possessions.  
I tried to fill it up with booze.  
I tried to fill the hole with people,  
But no human could fill your shoes!

I walked through life blinded,  
Praying for just a bit of light...  
Just a tiny little beacon,  
To guide me through the night.

Then when I least expected it,  
You put a spotlight in my eyes.  
It exposed all of my secrets,  
And my dirty little lies.

I felt ashamed and vulnerable.  
I felt unworthy and alone,  
But you had just introduced me to  
The family I had never known.

A group of men and women  
Who have felt the way I feel,  
Who are proof that it is possible,  
For this broken soul to heal.

In these rooms I'm learning,  
Only your light can guide my soul,  
And your love is the only thing  
That will ever fill this hole!

—Sue R., Terryville

### **For Friends Without a Sponsor**

For friends without a sponsor and afraid of the steps... I expect you will have a long and slow recovery.

Yes, you can stay sober without the steps and without a sponsor to help guide you through them.

Yes, you'll get better physically and begin to grow again emotionally. Yet if you work the steps and begin to live the principles, my experience is that you will find a life beyond your wildest dreams. I know I did.

I found a life filled with the joy of loving and being loved, where I see goodness in people and the beauty of the natural world. Where I'm more present than I ever was and see each moment as a gift. Where I found faith in humanity again. Yes, faith in humanity, where humility, forgiveness, and compassion are more prevalent in my life rather than the egomania, resentments, and isolation of the -isms. Where the courage to do those things I always wanted to do somehow comes out of the woodwork. Where day after day I do and see good deeds, and reach out to others. Where selfwill run riot is a thing of the past. Where my heart and mind are opening more and more to others and to love. To a life filled with hope and gratitude and amazing relationships. Where serenity and peace replace suffering and fear. And, then there are the promises...

I just can't imagine my life without AA: the Steps, the fellowship, or a sponsor. They are the triangle that has kept me sober no matter what has happened in my life. And stuff has happened over the years. I would not trade my life in sobriety for anything, but I would gladly give it away to you if only you ask. The gift of recovery is here for the taking, or you can just stay sober and go to meetings.

—Mary C.

### **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!

**How to reach AA:  
866-STEPS12**

**Para ponerse en contacto con AA, llame:  
855-ESPANCT**

## **A God Of My Understanding (Reprinted from June - July 2013)**

Coming into sobriety at age 19 was difficult enough, but having the desperation to do whatever it took to stay sober was my saving Grace. I had a difficult time letting God work in my life, simply because I had no idea what God was supposed to be. I had grown up with so many ideas of who God was, I was confused as to what to call God as I understood him.

My sponsor directed me through a little exercise to create that vision for me. She told me to grab a piece of paper and start by writing where I saw God in my life. I wrote down the first things I could think of, like "Having a roof over my head" and "My sponsor spending time to help me through difficulty" and "A woman trusting me in her home."

Her next direction was to create one word for each of the sentences to describe them. The words were "Caring," "Loving," and "Forgiving." Those were the words to describe my Higher Power. I was instructed that each day I wake up sober, those were the feelings and actions in my life where I could see God. When I am in touch with those qualities, I am walking hand-in-hand with my Higher Power throughout my day. This not only helped me to find what God was as I understood him, but to create a an awareness of God in my life that I use as direction to be a woman of Grace and Dignity. Today, I see a God of my understanding everywhere.

-Brooke Y.

### **Public Service Announcement!**

Would you like to get involved in service at the district level? A District Committee Member (DCM), special committee representative, or your group's General Service Representative (GSR) could provide you with information and guidance. You could also attend a district/GSR meeting.

Don't know when your district meeting is? Or, perhaps you don't even know which district is yours? The map, which you can find online ([www.ct-aa.org/districts](http://www.ct-aa.org/districts)) or in the schedule booklet, will help you determine your district.

Most districts meet monthly. Once you know your district number, go online ([www.ct-aa.org/districts](http://www.ct-aa.org/districts)) to find out when and where your district meets – or ask a GSR.

**For more information:**  
[www.ct-aa.org/districts](http://www.ct-aa.org/districts)

## **Save The Date**

### **Rompiendo Fronteras / Breaking Frontiers 2017**

Domingo, 30 de Juilo, 2017 / Sunday, July 30, 2017  
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Hamden Plains United Methodist Church  
15 Church Street, Hamden

Registraton forms are available online:  
<https://www.ct-aa.org/new-and-events/rompiendo-fronteras/>

### **Area 11 Convention**

September 29 – October 1, 2017

The Radisson Hotel, 100 Berlin Road, Cromwell, CT

Registraton forms are available online:  
<https://www.ct-aa.org/area-11-2017-annual-convention/>

### **Fall Assembly**

November 12, 2017

VFW Hall, 41 Veterans Drive, New Britain, CT

Visit [www.ct-aa.org/new-and-events](http://www.ct-aa.org/new-and-events) for more info.

## **We Want To Hear From You!**

Submit Articles, Photos, Letters,  
Suggestions and Constructive Criticism:

**Email:** [alki-line@ct-aa.org](mailto:alki-line@ct-aa.org)

**Mail:** Alki-Line, 112 E. Main St, Meriden, CT 06450

**Hand** material to a GSR

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](http://www.ct-aa.org).

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**How to reach AA:  
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855-ESPANCT**