



ALKI-LINE



TAKE ONE, IT'S FREE

The Area 11 A.A. Newsletter Vol. 28 No. 1 Feb. 2019 – Mar. 2019

Servanthood

Our preamble states that we should stay sober and help others to recover from alcoholism. Before I could help others, I had to help myself to a new attitude. I am finding out that attitude adjustment is an inside job and the old attitude is reluctant to make room for the new.

Behavior change began the process. Meetings provided inspiration and direction, a home group kept me honest and step meetings inspired me to work on character defects. Because of AA's influence, I was a willing caretaker during my mother's final years. My sister lives a thousand miles away and offered to assist. I thanked her and told her to standby. Most of the time I am unaware of positive progress but the change in my relationship with my mother was extreme. The difference was an internal happening not caring because of guilt or duty. Could it have been Love?I hope so. As far as helping others to recover from alcoholism, I keep no records. The truth is that if I helped anyone, I was actually helping myself more. Being willing and showing up at meetings are my best tools.

—Phillip T.

Servidumbre

Nuestro preamblo dice que debemos mantenernos sobrio y ayudar a otros en recuperarse de alcoholismo. Antes de poder ayudar a otros, yo tuve que ayudar a mi mismo y tener una nueva actitud. Estoy encontrando que un ajuste a una nueva actitud es un trabajo interno, y la vieja actitud es renuente a dejar espacio para lo nuevo.

Un cambio de comportamiento comenzó el proceso. La reuniones proporcionaron inspiracion y dirección, un grupo de origen me mantuvo honesto y reuniones de pasos me inspiro a trabajar en los defectos personales. Debido a la influencia de AA, fui un cuidador voluntario durante los ultimos años de mi madre. Mi hermana vive a mil millas de distancia

y se ofreció a ayudar. Le de las gracias y le dije que esperara. La mayoría de las veces no estuve consciente del progreso positivo, pero el cambio en mi relación con mi madre fue extremo. La diferencia era un suceso interno y no un cuidado por culpabilidad o deber. Podria haber sido amor? ...Yo espero que sí. En cuanto a ayudar a otros recuperarse del alcoholismo, no llevo registros. La verdad es que si ayudé a alguien, en realidad me estaba ayudando mas a mi mismo. Estar dispuesto y presentarme en las reuniones son mis mejores heramientas.

—Phillip T.

Family and Friends

Only you know what I am going through
For now I know what I have to do
Somehow now ready
To walk that steady
Free from the things I once kept
Key is in each step
Cross through that door
Not be alone any more
Time to sit on the chair
Listen to those who share
Talk if you dare
The others do care
Glad to have found this place
For it is where to get grace
Life was a sham
Now it is the program
Not stuck in a fog
Just closer to God
Finally made that call
So it is thanks to you all

—Joe M., East Hampton



Revelations

It was challenging to begin a new enterprise after being sober for two unstable weeks. My spirit was mauled. I was at the end of my drinking career and, after investigating several bakery distributors, I realized no one was eager to hire me. I eventually met Pete, who was establishing bakery customers in central and northern Connecticut. His plan was to build new bakery routes and franchise them. I took over one of his first routes with merely a handshake and a used \$300 mail truck. Making a living was a new experience; being dry was also a novelty for me. This time I had the support of a group of sober drunks, whose stories of sobriety encouraged me. My family was not so supportive.

I discovered I was not unique, nor was I alone. I was finally able to accept cerebral palsy as my disease rather than as the cause of my alcoholism. I ceased feeling embarrassed by my speech impediments. Cerebral palsy was no longer the bogeyman in my life. Driving home on a Friday afternoon no longer required a shot and a beer. Saturdays and Sundays were now for AA meetings rather than drinking bouts.

Sobriety was not a leap into sanity, but it was uplifting. I was able to face my family problems with the confidence that the power of prayer afforded me. On the way home one January afternoon, I stopped along the road to admire a beautiful sunset. At that moment, I asked the God of my understanding for help on the domestic front. I stopped there each day to pray and to transition from my business life to my home life.

Friends recommended several spiritual readings to me. Every morning, after loading my truck, I would read those messages while eating my breakfast. I often experienced a 180-degree turn in my outlook. Religion was not a part of my upbringing. I neither accepted nor rejected any god. These readings introduced me to a spirituality that excited me. My spiritual development was slow; often, my thinking leapt ahead of my ability to change it. Friends said, "Fake it till you make it". I understood that the fast track to the AA way is not recommended and that true progress is often slow moving.

Thanks to AA, 2019 will be the year I celebrate 50 years of sobriety and 60 years of marriage.

—Phillip T.

The Three Legacies

Our AA coins or medallions that we get for our anniversaries have circles with a triangle in the middle of them. The AA symbol is a circle with a triangle in the middle of it. The triangle represents AA's three legacies: unity, service and recovery.

Unity is the fellowship in its simplest terms. The friends we make, the sponsors we find and the families that we become are all examples of AA fellowship. But the best part is walking into a room and knowing that we all have the same problem. We may not have the same stories, we may not have gotten here the same way but we aren't so different are we?

Service is being in the middle of AA. I've heard it time and time again but that's where you need to be. That's where I'm staying whether it's sponsoring someone, talking to a newcomer, speaking in a meeting, or just showing up. This program was built from one alcoholic, Bill W. talking to another alcoholic, Dr. Bob. We carry that on today and it may be the most important thing we do on any given day.

Recovery is outlined in the 12 Steps and the first 164 pages of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*. I never thought one single book could come to mean so much to me or change my life. How fortunate I was that someone took their free time to spend teaching me about the 12 simple steps of AA

Our Twelfth Step - carrying the message - is the basic service that the fellowship provides; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence. Therefore, AA is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die.

In closing, trust God, clean house and help others.

—Jay, Hartford

Retreat Weekend

A weekend away changed my perspective
It gave me a new outlook and objective
For the program and its people
For the life I now live
Because of the 12 steps
I've learned to forgive
I move forward to share
The joy in my heart
Thank you Higher Power
For giving me a new start

—Anonymous



Principles Before Personalities or How the 12th Tradition Save Me from Myself

“Anonymity is the Spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.” Like a masterful Zen koan, the 12th Tradition meets me where I’m at and speaks to me on multiple levels.

Anonymity keeps me humble. It keeps me and my AA brothers and sisters safe from the wreckage I can cause when I become the self-appointed poster boy for the program. It restrains my proclivity to opine on matters about which I know nothing. Anonymity keeps me a contented “blueberry in the pie”: neither greater nor less than, but a member in good standing of the large Spiritual movement that is AA.

My capacity for remaining “right sized” is contingent on my ability to remain humble, which in turn relies on my engagement in the recovery process. This is where the concept of “principles before personalities” comes in. Tradition Twelve challenges me to put my ego and pettiness aside and to think of others before myself. It also challenges me to connect with the new person without imposing judgement or expectations. That way, I remember what the struggle against the beast was like, lest I repeat the mistakes of the past.

I distinctly remember having been taken aside by a home group member who told me that I was one of the most pompous, arrogant and annoying people that he had ever met either inside or outside of AA. I also remember this same individual sharing some deeply personal things, which gave me the courage to let some of my hidden shame out into the light. Had I let my feelings insert themselves into the process, an opportunity for valuable learning would have been lost.

I have been given the freedom to walk my recovery journey, make my mistakes and learn from them. I have taken advantage of the virtually limitless number of perspectives available to me through AA and have deepened my spiritual life. I am honor bound to give my fellow travelers the same freedom.

The program of Alcoholics Anonymous has never let me down. Its Steps, Traditions and Concepts protect me from my baser instincts. They remind me to strive for that unattainable perfection while remaining honest, open-minded, patient and willing.

—Ken A.

Heard in the Rooms

Meeting Makers make it.

Promptly admit it when you are wrong.

'Anger' with another letter is 'Danger'.

Restraint of tongue and pen pays off handsomely.

Have an attitude of gratitude.

F.E.A.R.: False evidence appearing real.

K.I.S.S.: Keep it simple superstar/sweetie/stupid.

H.O.P.E.: Hold on, pain ends.

Today is the tomorrow we worried about yesterday.

One step at a time.

Program of attraction not promotion.

We all have just 24 hours today.

I am not a bad person trying to get good, I am a sick person trying to get well.

Growing spiritually is the answer to our problems.

Sobriety can't be kept unless it is given away.

When the student is ready, the teacher will appear.

Think, think, think!

If you want to keep something, give it away.

Service is the magic word.

The person that 'wakes up' first is the most sober.

Let go or be dragged.

There is no problem that a drink makes better.

You're as sick as your secrets.

I get drunk; we get sober!!

Under Cover

That imp fear
Rides on my shoulder
So very quiet
Coiled to spring
And feast on
Conflict
Doubt
And most prized
Self-pity
—Phillip T.



My Powelessness

Chapter 3 of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, "More About Alcoholism," states that "The alcoholic or potential alcoholic with hardly an exception will be absolutely unable to stop drinking on the basis of self-knowledge."

My first foray into AA was a testament to these words. Acknowledging I had an alcohol problem (self-knowledge), I started going to AA meetings a few times per week. While I went to meetings, I failed to do many of the other elements of the program such as Step work and service work. I was working my own program of recovery, and before I knew it I went back out.

Reflecting on this relapse, I had a revelation that my way of doing things did not work. If I was going to achieve any lasting sobriety, I needed to make a commitment to do the things that worked for other people in the program. I came back into AA after a few months of research and embraced the program with a more humble and open attitude. I listened and learned from the people in AA. I dove into the program and followed the directions as outlined in the Big Book. I went to more meetings. I got a sponsor. I volunteered as much as I could. And I worked the Steps with abandon.

Upon reflection, I surrendered to the program and I started to recover. The key for me was an understanding that I was not only powerless over alcohol, but I was also powerless over the solution. Once I gave up on me and my way, I opened the door to a new and greater power.

—Jon R.

AA works if you believe in God
AA works if you don't believe in God
AA doesn't work if you believe you are God

—Anonymous

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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SAVE THE DATE

Came to Believe Recovery Retreat

February 22-24, 2019

Red Lion Hotel, 100 Berlin Road

Cromwell, CT 06416

Registration/information: www.sobrietyandbeyondretreat.com

Northeast Regional Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly (NERAASA)

February 22-24, 2019

Delta Hotel Hunt Valley

245 Shawan Road, Hunt Valley, MD 21031

The Spring Grape Jam

April 13, 2019 — 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Powder Mill Barn, 32 South Maple Street,

Enfield, CT 06082

Area 11 Service Roundup

April 28, 2019 — 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

Edmund Town Hall, 45 Main Street,

Newtown, CT 06470

Area 11 Pre-conference Assembly

May 5, 2019 — 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

New Britain VFW Hall, 41 Veterans Drive,

New Britain, CT 06051

Area 11 Spring Assembly

June 9, 2019 — 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

New Britain VFW Hall, 41 Veterans Drive,

New Britain, CT 06051

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