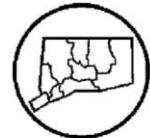




ALKI-LINE

TAKE ONE, IT'S FREE



The Area 11 A.A. Newsletter Vol. 28 No. 5 October 2019 – November 2019

Step Ten Keeps Me in the Game

"But when we approach Step Ten we commence to put our A.A. way of living to practical use, day by day, in fair weather or foul." I have been known to say pretty regularly that I have the best program in the world, as long as nothing bad happens. When I called my sponsor to whine that I had completed the steps, a few errant amends notwithstanding, but was anxious, irritable and worrying endlessly over my treatment at the hands of the world, he laughed (he's in the habit of doing that).

He asked, "What are you hanging on to? What emotions are you keeping to yourself that are driving the crazy train?" He went on to explain to me that I had, in fact, done most of the heavy lifting as far as step work was concerned and that I had a strong intellectual grasp of the 12-Step process. Despite this, my ability to live the principles underlying our program of recovery was in need of support. Sometimes I confuse myself with a "normie" and just absorb what I perceive to be the little slights and annoyances that the universe leaves in my path. I figure I can just roll with things and be unaffected. My problem is that as these trivial complaints and grudges mount, my frustration tends to come out "sideways", turning into misdirected anger, passive-aggressiveness and a lack of compassion. It becomes difficult for me to operate in the world.

Reviewing my thoughts, words and deeds either during or at the close of the day presents an opportunity for me to "defrag" my brain. I am able to assess which areas of my behavior and attitude coincide with the kind of life I want to live and which need modification.

"It is a spiritual axiom that every time we are disturbed, no matter the cause, there is something wrong with us." The world is going to be the world regardless of how I feel about it. Do I want to create or minimize chaos in my life? Do I want to spend my time cleaning up crash site after crash site because I am either unable or unwilling to recognize and correct patterns of thought and behavior inconsistent with the life that my Higher Power blessed me with?

Step Ten allows me to align my thoughts, deeds and actions with what is good and true. It makes tangible the rewards of right acting, speaking, and living.

–Jerome M., District 1

Stained Glass Offering

Lord God, we come before you,
Stained by years of life,
Broken into pieces
By shattered dreams and strife.

Lord God, put us together
With glue from blackened pasts,
A picture with a purpose
To share Your love that lasts.
Lord God, help us accept Your will
And trust that You know our place
In the stained glass window You designed,
Use our brokenness for grace.

But Lord God, please above all else
Keep us close to You
For the hope of the beauty in our piece
Only lives as Your light shines through.

Believe and belong, for each is essential
In the masterpiece of God.

–Rick P., Vernon

Christmas and New Year's

Alkathons:

For publication in the December/January edition of the Alki-Line, please submit Alkathon information by

November 15, 2019

email: alki-line@ct-aa.org

No Matter What

Although my sobriety date is May 17, 2006, I have been in and out for many years due to my inability to follow the simple steps from our Big Book. I finally began the steps with a sponsor that year. It was emotional, but so worthwhile.

At 17 months sober, my whole world fell apart. My 22 year-old son was murdered by my son-in-law, who was high on PCP. My daughter had a breakdown and no one in the family was functioning. I went to A.A. meetings, cried, yelled, screamed but most importantly, I stayed sober! I had a sponsor who kept it real by not sugar-coating how hard this would be to walk through. She and many members, male and female, loved me through this horrible situation using all the A.A. books, slogans and meetings. I learned what 24 hours at a time really meant and how to turn it over to a God of my understanding without taking it back. I learned how to be honest with my emotions when I took responsibility every night using the 10th step. I finally understood through my Big Book that God didn't do this to punish me for all my years of drunkenness. I took it one day at a time, sometimes moments at a time and began to heal in every way possible. I'm forever grateful for all those members who loved me through this.

On May 17, 2019, I celebrated 13 years, day by day, no matter what. I'm now on the other side though I have emotional moments. I can't give enough thanks for the support I have received from all of the A.A. meetings and members in my area. I'm here today to say that with our Big Book, a sponsor, and meetings we can walk through anything.

—Suzette J., New London

Paso Lo Qe Pase

Aunque mi fecha de sobriedad es el 17 de mayo de 2006 yo he entrado y salido por varios años debido a mi inhabilidad de seguir los pasos sencillos de nuestro Libro Grande. Finalmente ese año empecé a hacer los pasos con una madrina y fue emotivo pero bien valió la pena.

A los 17 meses de sobriedad mi mundo entero se derrumbó. Mi hijo de 22 años fue asesinado por mi yerno quien estaba elevado con polvo de ángel. Mi hija tuvo una crisis nerviosa y ninguno en la familia estaba funcionando bien. ¡Yo fui a reuniones de A.A., lloré, grité y chillé pero lo más importante es que me mantuve sobria! Yo tenía una madrina que me decía las cosas tal y como eran sin endulzarme qué tan duro iba a ser sobrellevar esto. Ella y varios miembros, hombres y mujeres me dieron amor durante esta situación horrible usando todos los libros de A.A., los axiomas y reuniones. Aprendí lo que realmente significan 24 horas a la vez y cómo entregárselo al Dios de mi entendimiento sin quitárselo de nuevo.

Aprendí cómo ser honesta con mis emociones cuando tomaba responsabilidad de mis actos cada noche usando el 10º paso. Finalmente comprendí a través de mi Libro Grande que Dios no hizo esto para castigarme por todos mis años de borrachera. Llevó tomarlo un día a la vez, a veces momentos a la vez y comencé a sanar en todas las formas posibles. Estoy eternamente agradecida por todos aquellos miembros que me brindaron amor mientras pasaba por esto.

El 17 de mayo de 2019 yo celebré 13 años, día a día, sin importar qué pasara. Ahora estoy del otro lado aunque tenga momentos emocionales. No puedo agradecer lo suficiente por el apoyo que he recibido de todas las reuniones y compañeros de A.A. en mi área. Estoy aquí hoy para decir que con nuestro Libro Grande, una madrina (o padrino) y reuniones, podemos superar cualquier cosa.

—Suzette J., New London

Let's Celibrate

'Cause Bill and Dr. Bob
did hob-nob
the demon drink
finding ways to rethink
and share insight
of common plight

A spiritual vibe
came alive
A pathway plan
did expand

Came the dawn
to pass it on
and tend this seed
drunks today strive to heed
Grateful

— Phillip T.

Bury the Past?

I watch the white line in the road slide behind me. I swerve to the left. Okay, now keep it steady. I see a road curving behind me. I'm not sure where I'm going because I am steering my car by looking in the rearview mirror. Am I steering my life of sobriety by looking backwards? Don't I need to focus on the future and not on the past? Continually looking back could lead me to **the** drink. What did I hear at an A.A. meeting? "*You can't bury the past, you can only build on the future.*" Can't I simply bury it, and it will go away? No. It will always be there like a signpost you pass along the road of life. As you travel forward, the signpost gets smaller in the rearview mirror, but it's always there.



I entered this world one year prior to the publication of the A.A. Big Book. The timing was a curious few months shy of full term after my parents got married. I came of age in a solid blue-collar home. I had a hard-working dad and a home-making mom. Dad came home on Friday, gave the paycheck to mom, and would disappear into the Bocce Club for the weekend. I don't remember him ever coming home drunk.

Although neither of my parents advanced beyond sixth grade, they wanted me to be the first of the "cousins" to graduate from college. And so I did, but I had to pay my own way. Along the way, I bought into the "American Dream" which to me meant: you get an education, a job, get married, have a family and live happily ever after. However, something happened along the way: alcohol.

From early college on, there were fifty-five years of drinking on a somewhat continuous basis. Sometimes getting drunk, but always drinking. My children never had a non-drinking Dad. When twenty-six years of marriage ended in divorce, the "American Dream" came to a screeching halt. What happened? Alcohol, combined with a wife who had grown up in an alcoholic household. I could have, should have, and would have handled it differently if I had realized the insidious hold alcohol had on me. After my second wife of twenty-two years slipped over to the other side of life, I used that as an excuse to really crank up the drinking. "*Insidious indeed*," the bottle said to me as I lifted it to my lips.

While drinking, I didn't care about the past. Early in the A.A. program, I was guilt-ridden about the wreckage I had left behind. I carried the past around my neck like the albatross of the fabled ancient mariner. (Hey, what step is that?). Now I choose to leave the past behind, leave it buried and yet be respectful of it. I choose not to be forgetful of the past nor to be guilt-ridden over it. It is there, like the signpost, fading in the distance. While discussing this article with a friend, I was asked should I not build on the past. Should I build on the lessons learned? I suppose so. Some of the things I remember of the past I don't like and I am changing.

Digging up the past can be dangerous. "*Insidious Indeed*," I hear from somewhere. Bury the past, build a future. I would like my future to be where my children see me as a loving, caring, grateful father. My fellow A.A.'s see me as a sober and solid ally while my other friends see me as helpful and reliable. Have I arrived? There is no arrival! There is only the journey. The past is past and the future is only a day away. "*One day at a time*," I hear from somewhere.

— Al Di.

Thoughts after Attending ICYPAA 2019

Have you ever watched over a thousand recovering alcoholics cheer on the newcomer and chant, "We love you" in a room full of hope? That was my most recent experience at The International Conference of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous (ICYPAA) held in Boston in August. It was absolutely amazing because we don't get this at our regular meetings. People who get 24-hour medallions are not greeted like this. I must never forget that the newcomer is the most important person in the room and it's my duty to try and carry the message of experience, strength and hope to them. In my experience, fellowship is an extremely important part of the program of Alcoholics Anonymous and it truly saved my life. I probably would not be alive if it wasn't for the loving hand of A.A. that stayed extended to me in my times of utter desperation. I need to continue to keep my hand extended. I need to not allow people who relapse get pushed out of my friend group, feel alone and ashamed, and get stuck in that state of isolation that I lived in for years of my life. The only requirement for A.A. membership is the desire to stop drinking and I am forever grateful that I was welcomed with open arms before I admitted defeat. The spirit of the fellowship gave to me everything that alcohol took from me. I need to carry that same energy used to greet newcomers at conferences with me daily and never forget that I am responsible.

— T.J..

Fear

Skin shaking
eyes widened
voices shouting
heart racing
palms sweating
fear of loss
fear of hate
fear of everything beyond the gate
fear of relapse
fear of shame
fear of forgetting God's name.

Thoughts are racing
pulse is pacing
faith is depleting
but I'm on my knees pleading.

May God grant me the grace
to get my head out of this place.

— M.C.

2019 THANKSGIVING ALKATHONS

Ansonia: Sahara Club, 309 Main Street

Wed., November 27 @ 5:00 pm – Thurs., November 28 @ 5:00 pm

Bridgeport: St. George's Episcopal Church, 755 Clinton Ave

Wed., November 27 @ 6:00 pm – Thurs., November 28 @ 6:00 pm

Clinton: St. Mary's Church, 54 Grove Street

Wed., November 27 @ 4:00 pm – Thurs., November 28 @ 2:00 pm

-Wed. 4:00 pm-9:00 pm – Thanksgiving meal

Danbury: Fellowship Center, 15 Great Pasture Road

Wed., November 27 @ 4:00 pm – Thurs., November 28 @ 4:00 pm

Hamden: Dunbar United Church, 787 Benham Street

Thurs., November 28 @ 7:00 am – 11:00 pm

- Thanksgiving meal served at 2:00 pm

- Candlelit meeting at 10:00 pm

Litchfield: First Congregational Church, 21 Torrington Road

Thurs., November 28 @ 9:00 am – 9:00 pm

Milford: Mary Taylor Church on the Green, 168 Broad St

Wed., November 27 @ 4:00 pm – Thurs., November 28 @ 4:00 pm

- Wed. 5:00 pm – 8:00 pm - Thanksgiving meal

Naugatuck: St. Michael's Church, 210 Church Street

Thurs., November 28 @ 7:00 am - Noon

Norwalk: Broad River Church, 163 New Canaan Ave

Wed., November 27 @ 6:00 pm – Thurs., November 28 @ 4:00 pm

Windsor: Recovery Club, 118 Palisado Avenue

Wed., November 27 @ 5:30 pm – Thurs., November 28 @ 5:30 pm

- Thurs. 12 Noon - 2:00 pm - Thanksgiving meal

2019 CHRISTMAS ALKATHONS

Ansonia: Sahara Club, 309 Main Street

Tues., December 24 @ 5:00 pm – Wed., December 25 @ 5:00 pm

Cheshire: Cheshire Grange, 44 Wallingford Road

Tues., December 24 @ Noon – Wed., December 25 @ Noon

Litchfield: First Congregational Church, 21 Torrington Road

Tues., December 24 @ 6:00 pm – Wed., December 25 @ Noon

West Hartford: St. Mark's Church, 467 South Quaker Lane

Tues., December 24 @ 5:30 pm – Wed., December 25 @ 5:30 pm

Christmas and New Year's

Alkathons:

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Alkathon information by

November 15, 2019

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SAVE THE DATE

Area 11 Fall Assembly

November 3, 2019 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Pitkin Community Center, 30 Greenfield Street

Wethersfield, CT 06109

2019 Fall GrapeJam

November 16, 2019 6:00 PM – 10:30 PM

First Baptist Church, 581 Meriden Avenue

Southington, CT 06489

- fellowship, food and live music

- admission: purchase of a Grapevine book or donation of an A.A. book in good condition for use in corrections

34th Annual Legacy Breakfast

November 17, 2019 9:00 AM – 12:30 PM

The Italian Center, 1620 Newfield Avenue

Stamford, CT 06905

- admission: \$32.00

- information: <https://ct-aa.org/event/34th-annual-legacy-breakfast/>

Connecticut State Conference of Young People In Alcoholics

Anonymous (CSCYPA) Convention

November 29 – December 1, 2019

Red Lion Inn, 100 Berlin Road

Cromwell, CT 06880

- contact: ct-aa.org/cscypaa

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

iQueremos 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 siguientes:

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 o Representativo de Alki-Line

Alki-Line

This newsletter is by and for alcoholics; however, we review submissions by all interested in the A.A. 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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