



ALKI-LINE



TAKE ONE, IT'S FREE

The Area 11 A.A. Newsletter Vol. 29 No. 6 December 2020 – January 2021

Dry vs. Sober Holidays (A.A. Never Closes)

My first sponsor made it clear that if I wanted to stay sober, I would need to take suggestions. The first suggestion was for me to call her daily. She explained to me that I needed to get into a routine of calling her so when not if the time came, the phone would not seem to weigh 500 lbs. Being the good alcoholic that I am, I decided not to call my sponsor for two weeks during the holidays. I justified it by thinking that she was probably too busy. She had a family, a job, I didn't need to bother her. I was eight months sober; I thought I would be fine.

I didn't drink and I didn't go to meeting. As you can imagine I was a delight to be around. I made it through my first Christmas sober and filled with self-pity and resentment finally called my sponsor. I was angry as I watched my family get drunk and have a good time while I sulked in the corner. When my sponsor asked why I hadn't called, I snapped back stating "you didn't call me either!" I had convinced myself that she must not care much about me or she would have called! She told me that I needed to be responsible for making an effort to stay sober. If I wanted the sobriety that she had, I would pick up the phone. She also shared with me that she did the same thing in early sobriety and assumed her sponsor would call her. Her phone never rang.

Now that I get the privilege and honor to sponsor and service sponsor other women, I suggest they call me every day. I share my experience and reasoning for this. I have made exceptions and softened a bit with this recommendation as I have continued to stay sober. My first sponsor wouldn't even reply to texts except to respond "call me." I do agree with her that a text message is not a substitute for a phone call but, at times, we have to meet newcomers where they are.

My sponsor made it very clear that A.A. never closes. The holidays were not an excuse to miss a meeting or stop taking suggestions. By the time my second sober holiday season came around I had learned about alkathons and I even signed up to bring a meeting into an institution on Christmas night. Another Christmas Day, I hit five meetings with my newly sober brother and it was amazing. I have also

rung in many New Year's at sober dances and young people conferences. I can be present, happy, joyous, and free any day of the year because thankfully for us, A.A. never closes.

—Katie B., Portland

Navidades secas vs. sobrias (A.A. Nunca Cierra)

Mi primera madrina me dejó claro que si yo quería mantenerme sobria, yo iba a tener que seguir las sugerencias. La primera sugerencia fue que yo la llamara a diario. Ella me explicó que yo necesitaba entrar en una rutina de llamarla para que cuando, no si es que se presentara el momento, el teléfono no pareciera pesar 500 libras. Siendo la buena alcohólica que soy, decidí no llamar a mi madrina por dos semanas durante las navidades. Lo justifiqué pensando que ella probablemente estaba muy ocupada. Ella tenía una familia, un trabajo, que yo no necesitaba molestarla. Yo tenía ocho meses de sobriedad; pensé que yo estaría bien.

No bebí y no fui a las reuniones. Como podrán imaginar, yo era un encanto como compañía. Yo había logrado pasar mi primera Navidad sobria y llena de autocompasión y resentimiento llamé a mi madrina. Yo estaba enfadada mientras tenía que ver a mi familia emborracharse y pasarla bien mientras yo me quedaba malhumorada por una esquina. Cuando mi madrina me preguntó por qué no había llamado, yo le respondí de un ladrido "¡tú tampoco me llamaste a mí!" ¡Yo me había convencido a mí misma que a ella yo no le importaba mucho o de lo contrario ella me hubiese llamado! Ella me dijo que yo necesitaba ser responsable de hacer un esfuerzo para mantenerme sobria. Si yo quería la sobriedad que ella tenía, yo levantaría el teléfono. Ella también me compartió que había hecho lo mismo al inicio de su sobriedad y solo supuso que su madrina la iba a llamar. Su teléfono nunca sonó.

Ahora que tengo el privilegio y honor de amadrinar y amadrinar en el servicio a otras mujeres, yo les sugiero que me llamen a mí todos los días. Comparto mi experiencia y el razonamiento detrás de esto. He hecho algunas excepciones



y he sido un poco más suave con esta recomendación según me he mantenido sobria. Mi primera madrina ni siquiera me respondía a los textos excepto para decir “llámame”. Sí estoy de acuerdo con ella que un mensaje de texto no sustituye una llamada telefónica pero, a veces, tenemos que llegar a los principiantes desde donde ellos vienen.

Mi madrina lo dejó bien claro que A.A. nunca cierra. La época navideña no era una excusa para saltarme una reunión o dejar de tomar sugerencias. Para cuando llegó mi segunda temporada navideña sobria, me había enterado de las reuniones maratónicas y hasta me apunté para llevar una reunión a una institución en la noche de navidad. Otro día de Navidad fui a cinco reuniones con mi hermano recientemente sobrio y fue increíble. También he recibido varios años nuevos en bailes sobrios y en conferencias de la gente joven. Puedo estar presente, feliz, alegre, y libre cualquier día del año porque afortunadamente para nosotros, A.A. nunca cierra.

—Katie B., Portland

Day and Night

Night!

Each day would bring sadness knowing today
the demons and insanity would return unto me.

I would despair knowing it was waiting for me. Waiting to
take part of my soul. Yet I could not get away. I was trapped,
in my own mind.

Every day was the same, caged inside this bottle watching
my soul slip away.

I was insane. I walked alone with my demons leading the
way.

Day!

I awoke today with happiness in my heart. I was no longer
insane. Peace had come to me.

I was filled with joy, knowing I had put my demons behind
me. I had peace of mind, heart and soul.

I broke out of my cage in a bottle to be FREE!!

Each day, each step belongs to me. I walk with my Higher
Power. No demon can touch me now. I'm FREE.

—Wayne L.

When I Came To

“Came to” is a phrase that I would use in the morning, afternoon and evening when I would come out of my alcohol-fueled darkness. I look back now and understand that the darkness of my drinking kept the sunlight from penetrating my befuddled existence. I appeared happy in my darkness. I was hiding in my darkness . . . hiding from myself . . . almost as if I didn't want to exist anymore.

Now that I am an active member in the community of A.A., I have added another word to the phrase making it “came to believe”. I have had the dubious pleasure of living a long life and have experienced several lifetimes. I was an engineer, a family man, a farmer, a store owner, an entrepreneur, and finally a retired gentleman. In all of those lifetimes, I came to believe in a whole bunch of things. I came to believe in the “American Dream” and lost it. I came to believe in a Christian God and lost it. I came to believe that when you married it was for life, but it wasn't true for me. I came to believe in alcohol and it tried to kill me.

My experience with a god has wandered from Catholicism through a Pentecostal movement, then a slide across Wiccan concepts with a brief stop with Druids and a bounce to a belief in a god of the universe. Something created me and the things around me. I can't begin to conceptualize what a god is or does. However, I do believe in a power greater than myself because I have experienced that power.

There was no bolt of lightning nor a profound moment. It all started when I could not make it past the Third Step. Give my life over to the care of God? As a disciplined and educated engineer, I was in control of my life. I can slow down my drinking using my intellect and willpower. I was not giving up control and that was that. Or so I thought.

During the first few years, I attended A.A. meetings and still drank. I would drink before a meeting, drink after a meeting, and drink when there wasn't a meeting. In desperation, I told God that I was *willing to be made willing* to make a decision to turn my will and life over to the care of God *as I understood God*. What a coward I am. I won't do it, but if you make me do it, that's okay.

It happened so quietly that I didn't notice. One day I forgot to drink, then another day, then the week went by. I suddenly realized that I had not had a drink nor did I want one. “Hey, what just happened?” And so, that was that. The God of my understanding, my Higher Power, did for me that which I was afraid to do and unwilling to do. My desire for a drink was lifted from me, not by my will or intellect, but by the grace of my Higher Power.

When I came to, I came to believe in a Higher Power and a whole new lifetime opened up. I am living a life of sobriety, one day at a time.

—Al Di.



Heard in the Rooms

"Your mind is a dangerous neighborhood. Don't go there alone."

"The big difference between an alcoholic and God is that God doesn't wake up in the morning and think he's an alcoholic."

"The monkey is off my back but the circus is still in town."

"Feelings aren't facts."

"If you're gonna pick up, pick up a phone."

"The things you own end up owning you."

"Switching your drink of choice is like changing seats on the Titanic."

"More will be revealed later."

"Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and knowing exactly how it's going to come out."

"The research has already been done."

"Be spiritually fit before you do anything."

"First the man takes a drink, then the drink takes a drink, then the drink takes the man."

"My unaided will is no defense against the first drink."

"It's hard to hit a moving target."

When I Arrived

When I arrived to our fellowship in 1984, I started my day by reading a book, *Twenty-Four Hours a Day*. I found it, like most new things, to be over my head and confusing.

After a few years, and a fresh pass through the Steps using the original recipe (*Big Book*), I read Step Eleven from it. It contains promises I get every morning.

For me, the discipline suggested in the *Big Book* is harder, but much more rewarding and is the only one I've used daily since 1986.

-John P., Wallingford Tuesday Big Book Study

From Behind the Curtain

"I am Oz the Great and Terrible. Who are you and why do you seek me?" When someone at a meeting used the phrase "behind the curtain" in referring to how he first perceived God, I reflected upon my thoughts about God. For years He/She/It seemed far away, beyond the clouds in the sky. Behind a curtain if you will.

The blessings I receive when I attend A.A. meetings never cease to amaze me. A room full of ex-drunks, of all ages, of all races, of all . . . has shown me immense wisdom through each of their shares. Wow. In a new life without alcohol I have learned a new peace, a new freedom, a new happiness. You know the rest. The clincher for me was to drag my Higher Power out from behind the curtain and make God a daily part of my life. We have daily conversations up close and personal. These are usually about Step Ten which I often consult when difficulties arise with the wonderful woman with whom I live.

I was raised a Catholic. My mother and I would attend Mass where we would sit at the back of the church. My father would attend the local Italian Bocce Club and hang out with his drinking buddies. To me, the priest was making little white wafers and drinking wine. What did I know? I was there because my mother wanted me to learn something, I guess.

In early adult years, I became involved in Christianity (as if it is different from Catholicism), the Pentecostal movement, the Charismatic movement, and the Born-Again movement. In later adult years, I came to embrace the Wiccan concepts of a God of the universe. At about that time I was coming to understand the aspects of religion, faith and spirituality. Now in my senior adult life, I have come to embrace yet another aspect of God - the God of my Higher Power. Now I realize the God of my understanding has finally stepped out from behind the curtain to reveal Itself to me. God has become my personal embodiment of goodness and righteousness, my buddy, my go-to-person when I have doubts.

In A.A. I have learned that it doesn't matter if your Higher Power is a doorknob, the A.A. group or the Pope. We embrace our Power. I use the word "our" in a possessive sense because I believe there is no one-size-fits-all God. My God is very, very personal to me. My relationship with the God of my understanding had taken a long journey from that eight-year-old child to this eighty-three-year-old child in wrinkled skin.

"Who are you?" says God.

I responded, "It is I, a confused alcoholic that stands here before you."

"Why do you seek me?"

"I have the desire for a new life."

-Al Di.

Gratitude

Gratitude is just about the finest attribute we can have, and how deeply we of A.A. realize this. Together, we count and ponder our blessings of life, of service, of love.

-Bill W., December 1970



2020 Christmas Alkathons

Cheshire: (THIS EVENT HAS BEEN CANCELLED)

District 7:

Thurs., December 24 @ 5:00 pm – Fri., December 25 @ 4:00 pm

Online only; meetings on the hour, every hour

Zoom access:

Meeting ID: 833-0886-2606

Passcode: 819561

Audio only call in: 929-205-6099

For more info contact: dcm7-3a@ct-aa-d7.org

District 3:

Thurs., December 24 @ 8:00 pm – 1:00 am and Fri., December 25 @ 8:00 am – 12:00 noon

Online only (formerly held at First Congregational Church)

Zoom access:

Meeting ID: 287-769-878

Passcode: ogcrew

Link: visit ct-aa.org

2020 New Year's Alkathons

District 7:

Thurs., December 31 @ 7:00 pm – Fri., January 1 @ 8:00 am

Online only; meetings on the hour, every hour

Zoom access:

Meeting ID: 848-5595-2589

Passcode: 123456

For more info contact: dcm7-3a@ct-aa-d7.org

District 3:

Thurs., December 31 @ 8:00 pm – 1:00 am and Fri., January 1 @ 8:00 am – 12:00 noon

Online only (formerly held at First Congregational Church)

Link: visit ct-aa.org



Responsibility Pledge

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

And for that, I am responsible!

How to reach A.A.: 866-STEPS12



Save the Date

Area 11 Public Information Workshop

Saturday, December 12, 2020; 10 am

No registration needed

Zoom access:

Meeting ID: 893-6573-3119

Passcode: 230395

Audio only call in: 929-205-6099

Link: visit ct-aa.org

Northeast Regional A.A. Service Assembly (NERAASA)

February 26 – 28, 2021

It's Virtual!

For more info contact: www.neraasa.org

OR

Check out this video:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mswW2q3fOB4sJfFDJnZKEVEvVM0_6j2x/view

Please refer to ct-aa.org for information regarding state-wide recovery events and online meetings.

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 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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Para ponerse en contacto con A.A., llame: 855-ESPANCT