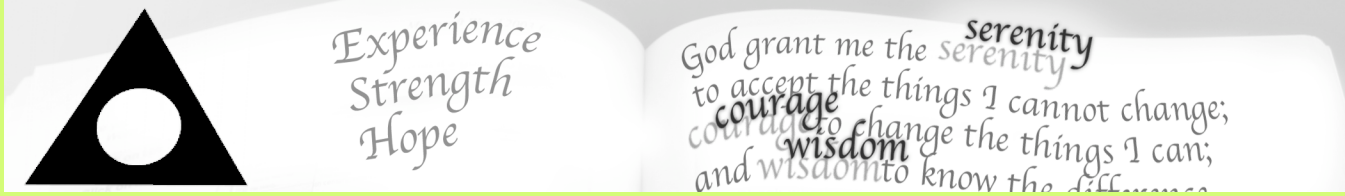


Hello, Higher Power Speaking.



District 14 Al-Anon Newsletter #6

February, 2008

Here are your stories. Here is our experience, strength and hope.

Step 1 - A Misunderstanding

Step 1 says admitted--not "admitted, now do something about it." The "now-do-something-about-it" is what the other 11 steps are for. But at first, with no sponsor, I could not feel that I had done Step 1 right until I had detached and stopped enabling before I went on to Step 2.

Today, nearly a year later, I imagine God was sitting out there, saying, "Fine. Don't find a Me of your understanding. Do it all yourself. See how far you get." Then God starts laughing because it is all very funny.

So, 14 months ago, I went out there and tried to do it all by myself, which was just like how Bill Wilson tried to stop drinking all by himself--tried to overcome his addiction by thinking it away. He couldn't and he wound up in a detox hospital one more time. However, that time God knocked him out of bed onto the floor. Now that he had God, he told Dr. Silkworth (whose whole practice was treating alcoholics--with a 90% failure rate) about it. Silkworth says, "I don't know what happened to you, but whatever it was, you'd better keep it." Then Bill started to get well and he told everyone else how they could get well, too.

My addiction is just as powerful as his was, except mine isn't my own alcoholism--it's someone else's. At the time, I was trying to think mine away too. When I had tried and failed for 10 months, I decided I just didn't want to think about it anymore. My way of not thinking about it anymore was to swallow 600 mg of valium and go to sleep. Then I woke up flat on the floor in my very own hospital, where I learned to detach and stop enabling enough to finish Step 1 and go on to Step 2. I'm in very good shape right now, but I tell friends that I hope Step 2 is easier than Step 1.

~ Anonymous

Let Go and Let God

When I think of this slogan, I think of trust. I have noticed that when things are going well for me, it's easy to trust my HP and "Let Go and Let God". But when things are not going well, I have a much harder time turning my life and my will over and trusting. Good fortune is evidence enough that God's in charge, but in hard times, I want to rely on my will and direct my own life. I can do it myself!

It occurred to me recently that the quality of my trust in my HP was immature. Before I was willing to let go and let God, I wanted God to demonstrate to me that it was going to be okay. I wanted concrete evidence on a daily, even hourly basis. If I didn't get it, my fear usually took over. My trust in my HP was proportional to and conditioned upon how much "things" were going my way.

One Christmas, when my son was 5, he began to have doubts about Santa's existence. He informed us that he had asked Santa for a Harrier Jet (Harrier jets are British and take off and land vertically). He said if on Christmas morning he didn't find one parked in our backyard, then this was concrete evidence that Santa did not exist! Oh my, I had been doing with my HP what my 5-year-old did with Santa!

In, "How Al-Anon Works" I am reminded that "[t]his slogan gives us permission to replace stress, worry and suffering with serenity and faith....We can rest assured that the answers, choices, actions and thoughts we need will come to us when the time is right because we have placed them in the hands of our Higher Power." I've decided to relax and, as another program person recently shared, "let go and let God be God".

~ Kim S.

The Beauty In Days

I want to share how I applied the program to a recent tragedy in my life. One of the women I sponsor in Al-Anon died in a traffic accident. For three days afterward, I went into obsessive sadness. I feel a strong bond with my sponsors because we tell each other things we would not tell anyone else. I have a good relationship with my son and daughter, but we don't talk about deep, dark secrets. The obsessive sadness I felt seemed similar to the feelings that brought me into Al-Anon, feelings around my husband's drinking and surprise leaving. The sadness I felt over Beth's death dominated my thoughts, such that I was not able to see anything positive.

So I decided to try to see something positive in her tragedy. I remembered that she had been working on Step 9. I had discussed with her how I did my Step 9. I put God at the top of my list of amends, because when I came into Al-Anon, I felt no need to ask God for help. I had assumed that I had always handled things myself. But after several months in the program, I realized I could not come out of the emotional pain without help from God.

So Beth said, "I want to make amends to God first also." Two weeks before she died, she wrote her amends to God. She also wrote amends to herself for the harms she had done to herself. On remembering that, I realized the most important thing in life was being right with God, and I know Beth was right with God. So I felt peace with that. The obsessive sadness disappeared and I was again able to see the beauty in days.

~ Yvonne E.

Easy does it

~ The Sloganeer

Ongoing Calendar Events for 2008

District 14 Speaker Meeting. 4th Saturday. 6:30–9PM., Refreshments, Birthday Chips & Literature Sales. Walnut Creek Kaiser, Medical Office Building, 1515 Newell, 3rd Floor Oak Conference Room. Contact: Maureen 925–212–4621.

District 6 Birthday-Speaker Meeting. Last Friday. 7:00 – 8:15 PM Kaiser Hospital (3rd floor Rooms C & D) Vaca Valley Parkway, Vacaville. Contact: Carl S. 707–631–9171 or carlsillva@comcast.net

District 12 Speaker Meeting. 2nd Sunday, 7:00 PM. Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church. Diamond Heights @ Addison, San Francisco. Contact: Tom K. 415–759–7404.

District 15 Fellowship Event. Last Saturday, 6:30 to 9:30 PM. Pot Luck and Speaker Meeting. AA, Alateen and Al-Anon Speakers. Broadmoor Community Church, 301 Dowling Blvd., San Leandro. Contact: Terry vE. 510–276–2302.

District 16 Speaker Meeting. 2nd Saturday. 8:00 PM St. Clare's Episcopal Church, 3350 Hopyard Rd, Pleasanton. Contact Suzzane: suelovinglife@yahoo.com

District 17 Birthday Speaker Meeting. 3rd Saturday. 5:30 PM Cedar Blvd Neighborhood Church 38325 Cedar Blvd, Fellowship Hall downstairs, Newark. Contact: Jenn H. jennhutchin@comcast.net

One-Time Calendar Events for 2008

Check web site for a complete listing:
http://www.ncwsa.org/cal-2007_Events.html

NCWSA Convention Alateen Fundraiser
February 2nd, 2008, 1–4 PM
Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
580 Trinity Drive, Vacaville
Contact: Darlene 707–494–9682

District 14 Day in Al-Ano
"Practice Makes Progress!"
February 9, 2008, 8–5 PM
San Ramon Valley Methodist Church
902 Danville Boulevard, Alamo
Contact: Al D. 925–250–3478 or Bill G. 925-864–2343

NCWSA Annual Convention
"On the Wings of Recovery"
Al-Anon & Alateen with AA Participation
April 4–6, 2008. Beach Resort Monterey
2600 Sand Dunes Drive, Monterey
Contact: convention@ncwsa.org

37th Annual Hospital and Institution Conference with Al-Anon Participation
April 25–27, 2008. Sheraton Gateway Hotel
600 Airport Blvd., Burlingame, CA
Contact: Louise M. lkmori@earthlink.net
or call 408–266–420

District 16 Day in Al-Anon
April 26, 9–4 PM. Workshops, meetings, potluck. Childcare is available. Guest Speaker: Leslie N., Olympia, WA. Trinity

Lutheran Church. 1225 Hopyard Road, Pleasanton. Contact: Heidi 925–413–3126 heidramor@yahoo.com; Karin 925–519-6362

26th Annual Growing Together Weekend
May 16th-18
Westminster Woods Conference Center
Occidental, CA
Contact: Melanie F. 408–309–3623

Al-Anon International Convention
"Connecting People Around The World"
July 4–6, 2008, Pittsburg, PA. Special series of service workshops. Thu July 3; Space is limited. Registration: \$105 by 12/31/07. \$125 by 5/31/2008. \$150 at the door. See www.al-anon.org/members for online registration.

Please tell us your stories. When we get enough, we'll put out another newsletter. So get crackin'.

Direct any comments, questions, requests for the submission guidelines or excess serenity to your editors: Scott L. and David L. at: **district14newsletter@yahoo.com**

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