

Serenity News

December, 2008

2115-I Citrus Blvd (US Hwy 27/441) Leesburg FL 34748

The alcoholic who still suffers is not always the newcomer.

Prayer of The Old Timer

Keep me from the habit of thinking I must voice an opinion on every subject, on every occasion.

Release me from the compulsion to straighten out everyone's affairs.

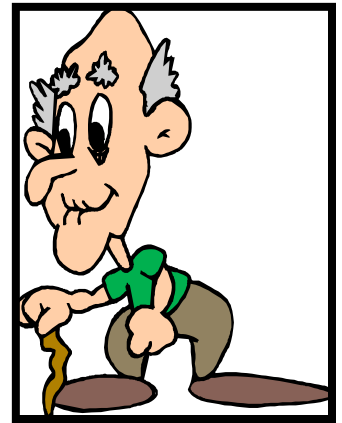
Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details. Give me wings to get to the point.

I ask for the grace to listen to the tales of other's pains. Help me endure them in patience, but seal my lips on my own aches and pains, they are ever increasing and my love of rehearsing them gets sweeter as the years go by.

Teach me the lesson that upon occasion, it's just possible that I may be wrong.

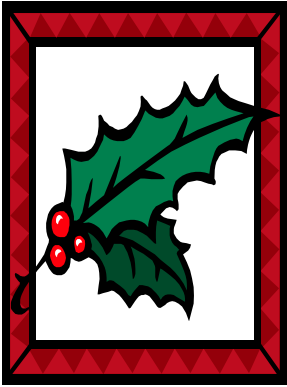
Keep me reasonable sweet: I do not want to be a saint, but a sour old person is so ugly.

Let me see good things in other people and the grace to be able to tell them.



As a newcomer is talking to an oldtimer, the oldtimer has a heart attack. As he slides down to the floor the newcomer follows him down still talking about himself. As the oldtimer is laying there gasping and saying "Call 911", the newcomer says "Ok, in just a moment but first, what do you think I should do about this situation I'm in?"

The Consequences of Relapse



If I am careless about this phase of my development, I will be lost before I am halfway through. I will renew my obsession with alcohol and sacrifice all true happiness. I will forget the word serenity and have no peace. No matter how far down the scale I have already gone I will fall even lower. I will resent the past and then repeat it, over and over again. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will return, and more. I will focus on selfish things and hide from my fellows. Sanity will slip away. My whole attitude and outlook upon life will change for the worse. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will consume me. I will again be baffled by even the most normal of situations. I will suddenly believe that God will do nothing for me.

Are these extravagant consequences? I think not! They have been fulfilled within me, always quickly, always completely. They will always materialize when I cease to work this program of recovery.

GRATITUDE

“Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, and confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.” Melodie Beattie

***Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues,
but the parent of all the others.***

- Cicero

Twelve Qualities of Sponsorship

1. I will not help you to stay and wallow in limbo.
2. I will help you to grow, to become more productive, by your definition.
3. I will help you become more autonomous, more loving of yourself, more excited, less sensitive, more free to become the authority for your own living.
4. I can not give you dreams or "fix you up" simply because I can not.
5. I can not give you growth, or grow for you. You must grow for yourself by facing reality, grim as it may be at times.
6. I can not take away your loneliness or your pain.
7. I can not sense your world for you, evaluate your goals for you, tell you what is best for your world; because you have your own world in which you must live.
8. I can not convince you of the necessity to make the vital decision of choosing the frightening uncertainty of growing over the safe misery of remaining static.
9. I want to be with you and know you as a rich and growing friend; yet I can not get close to you when you choose not to grow.
10. When I begin to care for you out of pity or when I begin to lose faith in you, then I am inhibiting both for you and for me.
11. You must know and understand my help is conditional. I will be with you and "hang in there" with you so long as I continue to get even the slightest hint that you are still trying to grow.
12. If you can accept this, then perhaps we can help each other to become what God meant us to be, mature adults, leaving childishness forever to the little children of the world.



We're on the web!

lakesumterintergroup.com



ALCOHOL FAMILY ROLES

One model that is helpful in identifying child behaviors is that of Sharon Wegscheider (1981). In this model children adopt various coping and enabling roles.

Little caretaker

The little caretaker role is often a carbon copy of the partner of the alcoholic. They take care of the alcoholic; getting drinks, cleaning up after the alcoholic and soothing over stressful situations and events. They are validated by approval for taking responsibility for the alcoholic and their behavior. This little person often goes on to become a partner of an alcoholic or other dysfunctional person if they do not get treatment.

Family hero

The family hero role brings pride to the family by being successful at school or work. At home, the hero assumes the responsibilities that the enabling parent abdicates. By being overly involved in work or school, they can avoid dealing with the real problem at home and patterns of workaholicism can develop. Although portraying the image of self-confidence and success, the hero may feel inadequate and experience the same stress-related symptoms as the enabler.

Scapegoat

The scapegoat role diverts attention away from the chemically dependent person's behavior by acting out their anger. Because other family members sublimate their anger, the scapegoat has no role model for healthy expression of this normal feeling. They become at high risk for self-destructive behaviors and may be hospitalized with a variety of traumatic injuries. Although all the children are genetically vulnerable to alcoholism, this child is often considered the highest risk because of their association with risk-taking activities and peers. Although tough and defiant, the scapegoat is also in pain.

Lost child

The lost child role withdraws from family and social activities to escape the problem. Family members feel that they do not need to worry about them because they are quiet and appear content. They leave the family without departing physically by being involved with television, video games, or reading. These children do not bring attention to themselves, but also do not learn to interact with peers. Many clinicians have noted that bulimia is common in chemically dependent families and feel this child is prone to satisfy their pain through eating.

Family clown

The family clown role brings comic relief to the family. Often the youngest child, they try to get attention by being cute or funny. With family reinforcement, their behavior continues to be immature and they may have difficulty learning in school.

<http://alcoholselfhelpnews.wordpress.com/2007/04/06/alcoholic-family-roles/>

Twelve Step Recovery Is Spirituality At Its Best
"Recovering people learn how to deal with guilt and shame in ways that nurture their spirits. They grow to understand that shame is feeling bad about who you are, while guilt is feeling bad about what you've done".

Nancy Kehoe, Ph.D., is a Massachusetts psychologist who for 20 years has trained mental health care providers to tend to the spiritual as well as the psychological needs of their clients. At a Hazelden Women Healing conference in April, Kehoe emphasized that although spirituality and religion can be integrally linked to mental health, the therapeutic community is usually reluctant or ill-equipped to explore these areas with clients — even though doing so could greatly enhance and speed up their recovery. Understanding how people image God or a Higher Power and what role spirituality plays in patients' lives can give therapists valuable information for diagnosis and treatment, Kehoe said.

Mental health professionals can learn much from Alcoholics Anonymous, an organization founded on the premise that recovery and healing involve body, mind, and spirit, she says. Life is out of control for people who struggle with substance abuse or other addictive behaviors, and the first step toward recovery is acknowledging that healing requires more than willpower.

"Most people try to live by self-propulsion," says AA's Big Book, "Alcoholics Anonymous," the basic text of Twelve Step groups. But to recover they have to "quit playing God." "We are not saints," says the Big Book. "The point is, that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are guides to progress."

That spiritual progress is not about religion; it's about accepting that you need help from a source outside yourself to recover from addictive practices. The "Higher Power" who guides in the recovery journey is defined by each individual. It might be a spiritual being, it might be nature, or it could be a God of traditional religions. As the authors of the Big Book put it, "To us, the Realm of the Spirit is broad, roomy, all inclusive; never exclusive or forbidding to those who earnestly seek."

While recovering people are encouraged to pray or meditate for guidance and wisdom, they don't expect a Higher Power to do all the work of recovery for them. And members of Al-Anon understand that prayer alone can't make a husband or a mother or a child stop drinking or using drugs. An addict has to want to recover, and has to take that first step for him or herself. In the meantime, Al-Anon members discover that while they can't control the actions or inactions of their loved ones, through the help of their group and their Higher Power, they can learn how to care for themselves in healthy ways that will enrich their own lives and spirits.

Twelve Step recovery is spirituality at its healthiest. Recovering people are told to honestly examine their character defects, and to then make amends to those they have harmed. This "relational" approach is not the same as the religious concept of doing penance, explained Kehoe, because it requires individuals to interact with those they have harmed in order to right a wrong. In Twelve Step recovery, making amends is a process that involves inner reflection, accountability and action.

Recovering people also learn how to deal with shame and guilt in ways that nurture their spirits. They grow to understand that shame is feeling bad about who you are, while guilt is feeling bad for what you've done. They often find that it is easier to forgive others than to forgive yourself, but with time, integrity, hard work, and the help of a Higher Power, you can make amends even to yourself.

Kehoe said that Twelve Step groups have also discovered how rich traditions, ritual and community — resources that have renewed peoples spirits throughout history — can aid in the recovery journey. Mutual-help groups are communities in which people gather to tell their stories and listen to another's story with respect and without judgment. Certain rituals such as reading a meditation for that day, checking in with each other, and taking turns sharing a problem or concern, are familiar practices that unite and comfort. In Twelve Step groups, all participants are equal, and all have the common spiritual goal of recovery.

It Works 'Cause They Work It! Congratulations!

BACK TO BASICS

Bonnie A. 12/27/03

BRING YOUR OWN BOOK

Stefanie C. 12/29/06

Dick B. 12/25/06

Diane B. 12/25/06

Russ S. 12/20/82

BUSHNELL BIG BOOK

Haywood B. 12/10/01

CAME TO BELIEVE

Rob G. 12/10/04

Mike F. 12/27/03

Roger B. 12/25/79

Jack C. 12/07/96

CLERMONT GROUP

Karen M. 12/10/87

Michael F. 12/19/92

Karen H. 12/24/87

CLERMONT LUNCH BUNCH

Don L. 12/4/81

EVERY MON. BIG BOOK

Sam L. 12/12/82

HAPPY HOUR

Tom D. 12/10/04

JOY OF LIVING

Pat B. 12/6/92

KEEP IT SIMPLE

Jimmy K. 12/24/98

Mark S. 12/04/07

Melissa S. 12-04-07

LADY LAKE BREAKFAST

Steve L. 12/01/05

Bart W. 12/28/81

Pat C. 12/26/04

John B. 12/15/98

Mike F. 12/27/03

Steve H. 12/28/02

Roger B. 12/25/79

Sandy T. 12/08/02

Tom V. 12/19/67

Bart W. 12/28/01

Eileen O. 12/30/99

LADY LAKE THURS. NIGHT

Michael W. 12/1/01

Dave B. 12/30/99

Gerald C. 12/31/01

LEESBURG WED. NIGHT

Bob W. 12/27/89

Rick M. 12/23/98

Lauren G. 12/26/01

LEESBURG TRANSITIONS

Barbara N. 12/30/05

Katherine W. 12/12/03

Sam L. 12/12/82

Jeff P. 12/18/96

Al B. 12/21/75

Judd S. 12/6/07

Mike S. 12/1/07

Stefanie C. 12/29/06

Eleanor E. 12/25/06

Arthur M. 12/7/86

LIFESAVERS

Frank T. 12/11/54

Frank T. 12/14/98

Rick H. 12/18/99

Hector P. 12/25/94

LIVING SOBER

Angie 12/03/00

Charlie K. 12/10/04

Rick M. 12/23/98

Andrew S. 12/26/98

LOST & FOUND

Lorenzo M. 12/1/04

Ray N. 12/2/04

James W. 12/18/04

LOVE & TOLERANCE

Bob W. 12/27/93

Rachel K. 12/23/04

MORNING EYE OPENER

Dan S. 12/05/05

NEW ATTITUDES

Don A. 12/3/00

OXFORD GROUP

Amanda L. 12/18/95

REBOS GROUP

Humberto B. 12/14/94

Keith F. 12/14/97

Joseph S. 12/20/98

SERENITY SEEKERS

Roy B. 12/07/85

SOUTH LAKE WOMEN'S

Karen H. 12/24/87

STEPPING STONES

Catherine S. 12/28/05

Marianna C. 12/21/08

Sheryl H. 12/20/07

Paul D. 12/16/89

Taylor B. 12/27/01

TAKE ACTION GROUP

Glen T. 12/11/00

TAKE IT EASY MEN'S

Jack C. 12/7/1996

Robert G. 12/10/2004

Rick M. 12/23/1998

David St. P. 12/25/1985

Fred T. 12/31/1976

TAKE IT EASY WOMEN'S

Sandy T. 12/8/02

Joanne G. 12/10/01

Barb W. 12/28/81

TOGETHER WE CAN

Dave M. 12/19/99

T.H.I.S. GROUP

Scott D. 12/19/93

12 STEPS TO NEW

BEGINNING

Dianne B. 12/25/06

Richard B. 12/25/06

Mark C. 12/23/07

TRIANGLE BREAKFAST

Wayne F. 12/7/73

UMATILLA BACKWOODS

GROUP

Randy D. 12/12/00

Griffin B. 12/31/04

WED NIGHT MORRISON

Lauren G. 12/26/02

Tom M. 12/20/91

WILDWOOD LIVING SOBER

Rick M. 12/23/98

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN LAKE/SUMTER INTERGROUP TERRITORY

NOTE:

If you would like something included in the Serenity News, deliver it to Intergroup or Pam K. by the last Monday of the month. Mail or take to Intergroup (2115-I Citrus Blvd, Leesburg) or email to pammknox@aol.com or lakesumter@aol.com Web site: www.lakesumterintergroup.com



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NEEDS YOU!
NEW LIFE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
CORNER OF LAVISTA AND 441S
FRUITLAND PARK**

**12 NOON M-F
(Open discussion)**

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It is empty because no groups have taken the time to let me know your activities or what you would like inserted here.

All you have to do is ask/send to pammknox@aol.com.
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Name _____

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Donation enclosed? _____

**LAKE/SUMTER
INTERGROUP MEETING
2ND WEDNESDAY EA. MONTH
6:30 PM
HELD AT INTERGROUP OFFICE
2115-1 CITRUS BLVD
(COTTOM PLAZA)**

**DISTRICT 7 GSR
MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING
NOW BEING HELD AT:
LAKE SUMTER INTERGROUP
2115-1 CITRUS BLVD
(US HWY 27/441)
7 PM
2nd THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH**

THE PRINCIPLE BEHIND STEP 6

**“Were entirely ready to have God remove
all these defects of character.”**

WILLINGNESS

Willingness is, of course, what this set is all about. It's simply a willingness to believe and let go. We don't need the answers about how it will work out. We need a definition of our Higher Power. We just need to be willing.

Now that we have accomplished an inventory of the good and not so good aspects of our character and behavior, are we willing to change them? All of them? The important part in this 12 step principle is the willingness to let go of our old behaviors and rely on our Higher Power.

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