

Monthly Reprieve

Volume 13, Issue 5

May 2017

RACINE AREA CENTRAL OFFICE'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Store is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 am—5:00 pm. Saturdays 9:00 am—2:00 pm; Closed Sundays

Relief Comes to Tired Eyes *by James W.*

When I was recently asked to share thoughts about Step 5, memories flooded my head from early days of recovery. The message I perceived of sharing my 5th step to God and another human being was one of fear and dread back then. I'm grateful that because of practicing this step the action continues to play a large role in my day to day sobriety. I don't know back then if it was others shared, or my perceptions of what they shared that had me back away from this important action. I know now that when the action of the 5th step is taken, the rewards are amazing. I lived a long time because of pride, ego and fear keeping my truths in a uncomfortable dark cranny of my soul. I had a soul sickness, from a selfish and self-centered way of looking at fears, resentments and sex relations. Life had become a pretty big burden to carry around

on those terms. Alcohol seemed to be at moments the solution to my soul sickness. A few drinks relieved me of the burden of having to play God.

Once I started sobering up it seemed an endless task trying to fix all the messes that seemed to pile up. Living alone trying to find a solution to these human prob-

lems was fruitless. Then returned the only solution I had alcohol. I realize now that separation from others and God leaves me with one option. For the alcoholic of my type it is to eventually drink again

and again. Loneliness couldn't be overcome from just attending a few meetings. It helped, I remember, hanging in the coffee shops, sharing my life with others until late hours of evening after meetings. Again no "human power could have relieved our alcoholism." So that would only take me so far.

When I saw others take the action of the 5th step and share positive experiences, it became obvious that good comes from this action. I heard about the sense of relief and seeing things from a different angle. So I was willing to take this action. I had a sponsor who read the Big Book with me. He also noted about how the 5th step writing in the Twelve Steps Twelve Traditions shared "the fruits" we receive from taking the action. He showed me how I would lose that sense of isolation.

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Fifth Tradition
"Each group has—but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic that still suffers."

 **May Focus**

'Higher Power, Thank you for helping me complete my housecleaning. I can now look the world in the eye. I can be alone at perfect peace and ease. My fears have fallen from me. I have begun to feel your nearness. I have begun to have a spiritual experience. I feel I am on the Broad Highway, walking hand in hand with the Spirit of the Universe. (75: 2)

Fifth Step
"Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs."

Admitted Defeat

By Jennifer S.

Many times in my life I walked into a room full of people familiar or otherwise and was afraid they would find out the real me. Walking into the rooms of AA broken spiritually emotionally and mentally was the best thing I could do for myself but the hardest.

I admitted defeat before I joined AA this time and all it takes is to practice the first step perfectly on a daily basis. I then started to believe and then after I came to believe I made a decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God as I understand them.

I drag my feet when it came to asking someone to be my sponsor. Fear of rejection set it. Once I got out of self and prayed about it I was giving courage to reach out, and I met a good person in the program.

We read the Big Book, and I was given suggestions. I made a fearless and searching moral inventory when I was finished I came to step five with my sponsor. There is a sense of many emotions feelings and thoughts of the tornado that I caused because of my defects of character. I own them owned them but in a very toxic way.

Resentments self-pity, selfishness all ran my life like self will run riot.

There is definitely a reason the 12 steps are in the order they are.

Today with guidance love and patience tolerance and kindness to myself and others I can walk into a room today and know that I am okay with myself.

I believe this could not be possible without admitting to God to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of wrongs.

A Ladder to Above By Armand

<http://laddertoabove.blogspot.com/2016/10/a-5th-step-story.html>

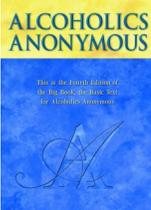
After sharing the fifth step with myself and another human being, after exhibiting a sense of humility, after acquiring a clarity of mind and a sense of peace I braced myself for the final piece of the step - to admit to God the exact nature of my wrongs. I met my sponsor outside a small chapel on a day just like any other, I thought ... until he swung open the chapel doors. I looked down the center isle to the alter and became immediately aware of the quietness and state of holiness that existed. I froze and swallowed hard, realizing that the

next few moments were going to be as profound as any other in all of my life. In that time, that place, and in that moment I was to seek the forgiveness of God for all I had done wrong in the past. Together, my sponsor and I slowly knelt down and he prayed for us in a way that only he would do. When he was finished I shared the exact nature of my wrongs with God - I had then completed the fifth step.

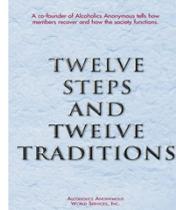
Since then I have participated in many fifth steps with alcoholics and addicts that I have read the Big Book with. It is altogether a very humbling experience to be a part of - making me feel the utmost of helpful as a human being and supplying a sense of wholeness to lives. Once I did a fifth step with someone and as we were leaving the Church he said, "I know that for centuries people like you have helped people like me do exactly what we did today... but today was the day that I had the opportunity to be a part of it."

Yes, it is a remarkable experience to feel the nearness of God and to share that with another. It is an experience that is not meant to be missed. It is a complete cleansing of the past and, in turn, a receiving of the gift of forgiveness and a clean slate - all built upon a new relationship with God.





Our Stories



Partnership *by Katie McKim*

Recently I went on the women’s retreat weekend. To outsiders, and my sarcastic self, it seems like an opportunity for the women of AA to get together, do their nails and cry.

Personally, I’m uncomfortable with any form of vulnerability; especially in front of other women. As the intensity of deep-rooted questions emerge, I want to make stupid jokes to lighten the mood.

I’m willing to look at myself, but to share what I’ve found and not have anywhere to run away from that insecurity is super uncomfortable. So when the house I was in wanted to talk about unity in relationships (friendships, family etc.) and the first question asks me, “What am I willing to sacrifice for my relationships,” my instinct is not to tell the truth. I know it’s going to make me look really bad.

Step Five talks a lot about leading a double life. There is the person I present to the world who tries to seem confident, well-spoken and put together. And then there is this lost insecure girl I keep hidden from view that will be dishonest and manipulative to get you to validate my existence.

like me, I can say you really don’t know me and push you away. In those moments, I am isolated and disconnected from you and God. I can’t live with the inconsistency of leading this double life.

The Twelve and Twelve talks about being ‘tortured by loneliness’ and finding this ‘mysterious barrier’ between myself and others that I can relate to. I don’t know how to make friends and keep them.

Everyone seems like they just know what to do and it’s so easy for them. I’ll watch them, curious to see what makes them different from me. Maybe I’m just not funny or I’m too awkward. Maybe, at the core of who I am, I’m just really annoying. And the whole time, I don’t realize that I’m looking to play a role on a stage. I’m looking at a better way to pretend. Time and time again it doesn’t work.

The key to all of this, the thing I really don’t want to do, is the key to AA; honesty and genuine humility. “The real tests of the situation are your own willingness to confide and your full confidence in the one with whom you share your first accurate self-survey.”

least one person who knows all of me.

I can remember that one really big and bad thing on my inventory that I didn’t want to even write down. After I read it to my sponsor, I stopped to look up at her. I wanted to see what she thought. But instead, she encouraged me to keep going. She didn’t look disgusted or embarrassed for me.

In fact, at the end of that inventory, she praised me for taking this step. She loved me anyway.

That is my experience in AA. My natural instincts are to pull away, cover up and pretend. The program tells me I’m going to have to try something else if I want to stay sober. It starts with my relationship with my sponsor, then it grows to a small group of friends and soon I’m in a cabin up north surrounded.

With each opportunity I take to tell the truth about who I am, I have less to hide and get closer to the feeling of peace.



When the world tells me they It is in Step Five, that I have at



always lived by the thoughts that I was different than you or no one “get’s me.” At the end of my drinking, being alone with a bottle seemed to be the path I was traveling. This step has given me the freedom that I could forgive and be forgiven. Just to the degree that I forgive others, am I able to experience peace. This promise has come true in my life. When sharing my resentments with another person, they are able to help me see an emotion which kills alcoholics from a entirely different angle. That can be spiritually life saving for this alcoholic. The question arises of who should I do this step with? The Big Book gives some guidelines that are prudent. It’s important that I have an individual who I can trust. It’s also vital that they understand the importance of this action for my chances of sobriety. I have done all my 5th steps with my current and past sponsors. It seemed best because they already knew things about me and I planned on continuing the relationship.

Most importantly they were also alcoholic and had experience that was vital. It broke down my separation from others when they would share with me similar situations that I had and how they overcame the resentment, fear and guilt. I truly wasn’t alone. Today I continue to use the practice of step 5 daily. I do this through steps 10 and 11.

Step 10 tells us “Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty resentment, fear. When these crop up we ask God at once to remove them. We discuss them with someone immediately.” Those actions keep me from falling into a spiritual abyss that get’s lonely. The listening to others 5th steps has been an important piece of my sobriety. To help others clear away the wreckage of their past and clear their God channel is inspiring to be a part of. To watch ‘loneliness vanish’ is a promise that holds true by these actions. To watch relief come to tired eyes is something you won’t want to miss.



“The Reprieve” is always looking for articles. If you have something you’d like to write about pertaining to alcoholism, please submit your article to raconewsletter@gmail.com.

Celebrate 90 days of Sobriety!

Let’s celebrate with a coin,
a camel and a hug.

Benjamin House
Stools and Bottles
Newcomers Meeting

Sundays
10am.



Events and Service Notes

RACO Volunteers Needed!!

The Racine Area Central Office has unfortunately had to close its doors during some daytime hours over the past few weeks due to a shortage of volunteers to staff the desk. If you or someone you sponsor has an interest in getting trained to staff the desk and be of service, please call RACO at (262) 554-6611 and we will get you in touch with John B.—RACO’s Staffing Coordinator. No one who needs the services of RACO should ever be turned away due to a shortage of volunteers! Be of service to your central office today! :-)

Kenosha / Racine Oxford Houses

Are you in early recovery or know someone who is? The Oxford House concept, which emphasizes that “together we can democratically run a clean and sober house” is helpful to gaining the strength and support to achieve long-term sobriety.

With separate houses for both men and women, there are Oxford Houses in both Kenosha as well as

Racine—providing the support and accountability to help in early recovery. For more information, or to request an interview, please call

(262) 800-3840 or visit www.oxfordhouse.org for a history, vacancies, locations and applications. Let the Oxford House help you or someone you love get a jumpstart into a happy and healthy life of clean and sober living today!

RACO Steering Committee Meetings

The Racine Area Central Office's ‘Steering Committee’ meets on the first **WEDNESDAY** of every month at RACO (6:30pm). The steering committee invites anyone who may be interested in Area 75 and District 17 events and happenings.

Please note the NEW day/time of the Steering Committee meetings—as they used to be

held on Saturday mornings! If you or someone you know might be interested in sitting-in on a Committee meeting or possibly filling an open position, please join us for a monthly meeting or email raconewsletter@gmail.com for information on available positions and position requirements. We look forward to seeing you at the next Committee meeting!

Upcoming Events & Activities

Grove Club Activities

- Saturday, May 6, 12:30-2:30 Cinco de Mayo pot-luck—Bring a dish to pass!
- Saturday, May 13: Membership Meeting at noon
- Saturday, May 20: picnic committee meeting at 11:15am
- Saturday, May 27: DANCE! DANCE! DANCE!



Kenosha Outcast MC- Anniversary Poker Run/Picnic on June



3 at Petrifying Springs Park-area 5. Poker Run leaves at noon. Food Served at 3pm. Speaker meeting at 8pm. Dance to follow at the OCMC Afterbar 1310 63rd St.



Help is Everywhere

District/Club Information

District 17		Racine, Wisconsin
Racine Alano Club 1140 Douglas Ave. Racine, WI 53404 (262) 634-9902	The Grove Club 1037 Grove Ave. Racine, WI 53405 (262) 634-9656	Benjamin House 4848 Highway H Franksville, WI 53126 (262) 886-9611
Benjamin House Website: http://www.benjaminhouseracine.org/		
District 7		Kenosha, Wisconsin
Kenosha Alano Club 630 56 th St. Kenosha, WI 53140 (262) 654-8246	Outcasts 1310 63 rd St. Kenosha, WI 53144	Southport Lighthouse Recovery Club 8017 Sheridan Rd. Kenosha, WI 53143 (262) 653-9800
Kenosha Alano Club Website: http://kenoshaalanoclub.org		
District 36		Burlington 12 x 12 Club
West Racine/Kenosha County		724 N. Pine St. Burlington, WI
District 6		Walworth County Alano Club
Eastern Walworth County		611 E. Walworth St. Delavan, WI 53115 (262) 740-1888
District 12		Eastern Lake County, Illinois
Alano Club of Waukegan 2419 Washington St. Waukegan, IL 60085 (847) 662-9640	Zion-Benton Alano Club 228 Sheridan Rd. Winthrop Harbor, IL 60096 (847) 746-9842	
Alano Club of Waukegan Website: http://alanoclubwaukegan.com/		
Waukegan Hotline: (847) 623-9660		
District 10		Antioch Recovery Club
Western Lake County		311 E Depot St.; Suite C Antioch, IL 60002 (847) 838-1882
Antioch Recovery Club: http://www.antiochrecoveryclub.org/		
Antioch Hotline: (847) 395-5988		

Alcoholics Anonymous is not affiliated with any club or other outside enterprise

Racine Area Central Office Officers/Steering Committee

Chairperson	Toni M.
Co-Chairperson	Dyland W.
Secretary	Deb K.
Co-Secretary	Alicia E.
Treasurer	Pam L.
Co-Treasurer	Tom M.
Staffing Coordinator	Cynthia P.
Co-Staffing Coordinator	Larissa H.
Newsletter	Stacy K.
Co-Newsletter	VACANT
Hotline Chairperson	VACANT
Co-Hotline Chairperson	Jason A.
Literature Chairperson	Rachel M.
Co-Literature Chair	John B.
Procurement	Wes D.
Webmaster	Brian K.
Co-Webmaster	VACANT
Advisor	Darrel S.
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