

Monthly Reprieve

Volume 10, Issue 9

September 2014

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

Step Nine - Facing Them & Freeing Me

By: Anonymous

Each year I like to run through the 12 steps as written in the book Alcoholics Anonymous. These steps were an adaptation of many works before them, and are a universal truth for all people who want to enjoy good “mental-hygiene” and an abundant life. They have been adopted by some 150 self-help groups, and in the words of my favorite forensic psychologist, are the best basis for mental health around IF worked and lived.

I am not a step guru, and like to keep things as simple as possible. Step 9 says we are to: “Make DIRECT amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others”.

Who didn't come into a recovery journey or 12 step programs and try to make amends in the early going. Particularly to family and those we were closest to? We, in the early going, wanted to save things that were important to us. We had much work to do on ourselves and our spiritual condition before we were truly ready to make sincere amends.

I made the list in 8. The one piece of

advice I got that really helped me get benefit from this step was to consult about my list, and consult about specific amends just before doing them.

Like many addicted people, I was inclined to have moments of grandiosity. My list was in fact a lot longer than it should have been because didn't you know, I was the “worst”? Some will relate.

After review of the list, it was prioritized by the weight of what I was carrying. I had to remember I was taking this action strictly for me, not trying to please the other person, and had to remember that I had to be totally honest, no matter what the cost. My sponsor helped me to do this, he was fully experienced.

To my wife, I kept my admissions to a general nature. I said enough to her to dispel thoughts she may have had about falsely accusing me of intolerable behavior, but did not get specific enough to hurt 3rd parties. As my program tells me, for many of us, our sexual conduct was not exemplary!

To my former wife and a family member of hers, it was decided to wait until a private face to face opportunity came

around. In time, it did, and the amend was made properly.

To a couple of people who had passed, I wrote a letter of amends to them and continued to work a “living amends”.

For the majority, it was face to face or voice to voice. I was humble and honest, non-argumentative and as open as I could be. I made no excuses for my behavior and took full responsibility for my actions. I asked honestly if there were a specific amend that could be made. There were a few suggested amends, and up until today, I have lived up to what was agreed.

To those I am closest to, particularly family, my amends continue daily. I have changed significantly, and am far more responsible in my behavior in the roles I play in their lives. With my wife (because many expect instant forgiveness) I can honestly say it was about 4 years before I earned back MOST of her trust. Actions, not words, are the acid test. I am a better person today than I was those years ago, but truly a work in progress—one redemptive day at a time.

Ninth Concept

“Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by its founder, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.”



September Focus

Ninth Step

“Made direct amends to such people, wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.”

Ninth Tradition

“A.A., as such, ought never to be organized; but we may create special service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.”

Literature and Comics

Red dot sale continues at Racine Area Central Office

In need of a new meditation book or simply looking to add to your already growing collection?

Your Central Office continues its Red Dot sale of meditation books, among other selected items in stock.

Each dot represents one dollar off the initially listed price and the more dots you see, the more you save! And as always, we continue to sell the basic

text of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Come on down to see what else we have to offer in our store and while you are here, keep a sponsee or sponsor in mind if they are celebrating a milestone in recovery.

We also sell a variety of sobriety coins and even offer Gift Certificates if you simply do not know what to get.



We are not a glum lot...



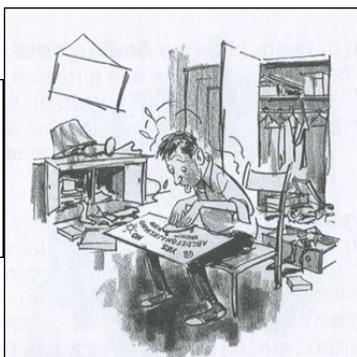
"I swear honey *hiccup*, I thought it *was* an AA meeting! There were drunks everywhere!"

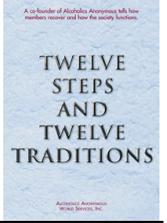


I *told* him another drink would kill him—I didn't mention *HOW*!

All I need is a sign but this silly board **KEEPS** going to the letters A & A....

Darn thing must be broken...



ALCOHOLICS
ANONYMOUS

Our Stories

Harnessing hope through prayer & meditation

By: Katie M.

The word 'hope' is listed in the 12&12 and The Big Book 42 times. Hope, when I was first getting sober, was like other abstract words such as 'faith' or 'love' or 'God'; I lacked the definition, but sought it with the desperation of the dying.

I came to Alcoholics Anonymous with a drowning sense of despair. I couldn't breathe; it filled my lungs. I tried to call out for help yet sputtered and gasped. So instead, I would just go to a meeting.

I remember one Friday afternoon, six weeks sober, that I finally felt it; hope. That feeling made such an impression on me because it was so different from everything else I had been feeling.

It was the elusive feeling that maybe, just maybe, everything would be okay; that there was the possibility that the picture in my head was a lie.

Before, I just thought that AA would

at least distract me from my misery. The path to hope for me has been like an efficient game of telephone; suggestions passed down from generation to generation to me.

It is not the road less travelled because there are millions of us that choose to take it each day. It is a worn road that I must take. And along the road, like Dorothy in The Wizard of Oz, I pick up many eccentric friends with crazy fears like me.

I do the absurd and ridiculous like pray, take suggestions from convicts, go to meetings, read and meditate. And with this experience that it worked today or last week, I do it again and again. I have come to believe that just because I don't see the stars, doesn't mean they are not there. Beneath the surface, beyond a cloudy night, there is hope.

In the moments of life, its pulsing heart resides in me, carrying me through it. It thumps, it beats, and it moves me forward. I can choose to corrode its walls

with resentments or I can clear it away, creating a safe artery with which the nutrients of happiness can flow.

There are times when I'm in darkness - I can't see what's happening or what could happen so I'm wrapped in fear. This darkness only lasts for a while - I'm on one side of it. I picture the earth spinning from day to night. The light is just on the other side. The situation I'm in will turn and there again the light will be. But while I'm in the darkness, I get to appreciate and see things I don't get to see in the sun; the stars and moon.

I have an opportunity to appreciate things that I normally would not. There is beauty and God's grace in the worst of times as well as the best.

I always have a reminder that God is in my life. I pray to keep my hand open in front of me; to walk through these fears, to put on this pair of glasses, to look past the clouds, to be open to God's Grace and will. *This is my hope.*

Continually "cleaning house"

I used to think that "working the steps" was a one-and-done type of deal - do these simple steps all the way through and you're 'cured' of your alcoholism forever. Through painful 'trial and error', I found that this isn't the case.

My sobriety depends on the daily maintenance of my spiritual condition - which includes my relationship with God, my willingness to be honest and regular actions that include amend-making and self-inventory. I am not 'free and clear' after the admissions and amends made in Steps 4-9; they were merely a start.

The fact of the matter is, I'm an alcoholic and my natural instincts lead me toward selfishness, resentment, fear and dishonesty. These instincts most often manifest themselves through thoughts/motives, words and actions. All of them have, and will, get me into trouble if I don't conduct a regular inventory.

Page 84 and 85 of the Big Book describe

how this is not an overnight matter. It should continue throughout our life.

Time and time again, my daily inventory has turned up bad motives behind actions that seemed okay on the surface. I have also Another issue that regularly appears in my daily inventory is the tendency toward justified or righteous anger & resentment. Through continued practice, I have found that most of these scenarios weren't related so much to what other people said or did. They really grew out of my own fears, anxieties and feelings of insecurity.

I personally found that, just like Step 5 suggests, if something disturbs me - I need to find another personal to talk it over with. And I've never done that without getting a new perspective on the problem. I am still often clouded by my own judgments and perspectives on how things *should* be. When I take my own filter off of a situation, and run it by a sponsor or trusted member of the program, I usually find that things aren't

always what they seem and my interpretation is usually skewed.

One final thought about the Tenth Step is the importance of the word "promptly". The sooner I admit my wrong, the less harm it will do to me and to others. Delay often suggests that I'm secretly fighting the Tenth Step, hoping that the error will correct itself without any embarrassment or pain. But delay usually makes matters worse. But the Big Book goes on to describe that diligence in the steps, up to this point, will bring a freedom from the obsession to drink - something I never imagined to be a reality. We will be placed in a position of neutrality and will no longer "fight" the urge to drink.

However strong we feel in our recovery programs, none of us ever has it made. Eternal vigilance in working the steps is the price of freedom. The rewards of contented sobriety and personal growth are well worth the price.

- *Anonymous*

Events and Service Notes

RACO prepares to move!

BIG NEWS EVERYONE! Racine Area Central Office will be moving in the coming weeks—but not too far! RACO will be relocating to a new space within the Elmwood Plaza complex! The move should happen in early October and we will be downsizing the current store inventory with a huge sale, taking place during Fellowship Day! The move is designed to better serve the Area 75 recovery community with a more practical meeting/store-space for our needs. More details to follow!



Upcoming Events & Activities

September 7th

Alano Club Breakfast
8am-10am
\$5.00 per plate

September 13th

Alano Club Ice Cream Social
7pm-8pm
\$1.50 small plate \$3.00 large plate

Grove Club membership mtg
8:30pm upstairs
Inquire at club to become a member

Joe Prott's Oxford House open house
1pm-6pm
1336 Virginia St., Racine, WI

September 21st

Build your own omelet
8am-10am
\$6.00 per plate

September 27th

Fellowship Day 2014
9am - runs all day
Speaker at 6:30pm
Racine Area Central Office

Thank You!

RACO makes every effort to thank each individual group and person for their generous (and much needed) donations. However, sometimes contact info cannot be found. On behalf of RACO, we want to thank you and your groups. Please know that your donations are always appreciated! THANK YOU!!

Let's hear YOUR voice!

The Monthly Reprieve is always seeking contributions from readers just like you!

You can share in a meeting, so why not put your experience, strength & hope down in print?!

If you have a particular story you'd like to share or even your recovery-inspired poetry, we'd love to add it to the next issue!

If interested, simply e-mail your 200-800 word submission to raconewsletter@gmail.com. Your contribution will adhere to the principles of anonymity and only your last initial will be used.

So come on! Let's hear YOUR story!

Detox Help Needed

Volunteers are needed for detox meetings throughout the area. Detox meetings are a great way to carry your message to the newcomer, who often needs to hear a message of hope.

Requirements to become a volunteer are six months to attend with others and one year to attend solo.

Meetings are held Sunday-Friday at 8pm and Saturday & Sunday mornings at 9:30am.

Detox meetings are held at St. Lukes on Wisconsin Ave. and 14th St. For further information, please contact Roxann D.



Financial Reports

Group Donations

GROUP	July	YTD	GROUP	July	YTD
Anonymous Donations	13.05	64.30	Benj. House Sat. 7am Cellar Dwellers	10.00	96.00
Memorial Donationa		605.00	Benj. House Saturday 7am Upstairs	23.00	138.00
From Wendy (7/10/14)	20.00	20.00	Benj. House Saturday 6:30pm		16.00
From Phyllis (7/22/14)	5.25	5.25	Birthday Club (Laurel S—16 yrs)		16.00
Alanon - New Beginnings		50.00	Covenant Combined		300.00
Alano 10:00am Sunday		50.00	Fox River Group - Waterford		114.00
Alano 8:00pm Sunday Big Book		50.00	Grove Sunday 10:00am	100.00	100.00
Alano 6:00pm Monday Coffee Hour		179.40	Grove Friday 10:00am 12X12		125.00
Alano 8:00pm Wednesday		50.25	Grove Friday 5:30pm Big Book		100.00
Alano Friday Night Candlelight	20.00	20.00	Grove Saturday 10:00am		100.00
Benj. House - No Meeting Specified		33.00	Grove Saturday 7:00pm	10.00	60.00
Benjamin House - People, Places & Things		10.00	Kenosha Alano (no specifics)	7.00	7.00
Benj. House Sunday 8:00am AA/Alanon	33.00	175.50	Kenosha Big Book Study - Monday 4:30pm		200.00
Benj. House 10:00am Sunday Dwnstrs	23.00	125.00	Kenosha St. Mary's Lutheran Sunday Grp		50.00
Benj. House 10:00am Sunday Newcomers		73.00	Kenosha Thursday Night South Side / BB		25.00
Benj. House 10:00am Monday		12.00	Outkasts	50.00	50.00
Benj. House 6:00pm Monday 12X12	19.00	102.00	Paddock Lake 12 Step, Monday 7:00pm		72.00
Benj. House 6:00pm Monday Women's		3.00	Paddock Lake Tuesday Came to Believe	10.00	10.00
Benj. House 7:30pm Monday		29.00	Paddock Lake Miracle on 75th, Wednesday		30.00
Benj. House Tuesday 10:00am		78.05	Pleasant Prairie Good Shepherd 12X12		85.00
Benj. House Tuesday 6:00pm AA/Alanon		50.75	Racine Transitional Care	100.00	350.00
Benj. House Wednesday 6:00pm ISM'S		62.00	RACO Wednesday 7:00pm Big Book		25.00
Benj. House Thursday 10:00am		47.00	Salem Big Book Friday 8:00pm United Meth	40.00	40.00
Benj. House Thursday 1:00pm AA/Alanon	10.00	30.00	St. Andrew's Fireside Group		30.00
Benj. House Thursday 6:00pm Big Book	11.00	57.25	Union Grove Visiting Vets Group 75		50.00
Benj. House Friday 10:00am	6.00	51.95	Untion Grove United Church of Christ Wed		20.00
Benj. House Friday 7:30pm		65.00			
			DONATION TOTALS	510.30	4,307.70

Treasurer's Report

Expenses	July	YTD	Income	July	YTD
Monthly Rent & Utilities	1,781.31	12,700.46	All Donations	537.50	4,599.90
Misc. Office Expenses	158.25	989.82	All Sales	1,798.95	15,221.30
Literature & Merchandise	441.66	7,046.58	Rent—Groups	400.00	4,170.00
Quarterly Office Expenses	294.66	1,430.97	Misc Adjustments	(100.00)	(503.50)
EXPENSE TOTALS	2,675.88	22,167.83	INCOME TOTALS	2,636.45	23,487.70
			GAIN / (LOSS)	(39.43)	1,319.87



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	Club Breakaway 8017 Sheridan Rd. Kenosha, WI 53143 (262) 653-9800
Kenosha Alano Club Website: http://kenoshaalanoclub.org		
District 36		Burlington 12 x 12 Club 724 N. Pine St. Burlington, WI
West Racine/Kenosha County		
District 6		Walworth County Alano Club 611 E. Walworth St. Delavan, WI 53115 (262) 740-1888
Eastern Walworth County		
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 311 E Depot St.; Suite C Antioch, IL 60002 (847) 838-1882
Western Lake County		
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	Darrell S.
Co-Chairperson	Roxann D.
Secretary	Courtney K.
Co-Secretary	Rachel S.
Treasurer	Pam L.
Co-Treasurer	Christine S.
Staffing Coordinator	John B.
Co-Staffing Coordinator	James S.
Newsletter	Kevin B.
Co-Newsletter	Steve H.
Hotline Chairperson	Mark S.
Co-Hotline Chairperson	Jon K.
Literature Chairperson	Mary S.
Co-Literature Chair	Nick J.
Procurement	Jenny L.
Webmaster	Courtney L.
Co-Webmaster	Brian K.
Advisor	Dawn S.
3701 Durand Avenue #225	
Racine, WI 53403	
(262) 554-6611	
24-Hour Hotline: (262) 554-7788	

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