

Monthly Reprieve

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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

Daily Infractions

By: Alex A.

Multiple felon, repeat state prison recidivist, insatiable drunken junkie, selfish thief, inconsiderate hypersensitive liar. These are all very flattering labels I've used for myself, and I know that I'm not the only one. Although I identify with these characteristics, I've learned that these defects aren't what defines me anymore. Based on these ideas, I've also come to learn that there is a big difference between Self-Degradation and Humility.

I came into the rooms of AA armed only with obscured facts about myself, all generally having something to do with being a parasite of the human race. There wasn't much to go on other than admitting that the majority of my adult life had been a series of very poor choices. After a few months in the program, most of the blaming and outward resentment fell away and gave birth to this idea that I was a bad person. Blaming others for my circumstances and resenting them for it became irrational. It was clear after my 5th step that I was the only one to blame.

Next came the recurrent affirmations of me saying to myself that I was *still* a lunatic and that I *am* scum, I *am* nuts, I *am* crazy. This belief was voiced in meetings and fellowship circles ad nauseum. Even after a couple years of sobriety, this

notion never left, and there seemed to be something wrong with that. I thought I was supposed to be getting better! One day, I was sitting in a 1st step meeting with a couple brand new alcoholics and I heard these ideas shared by someone else while they were describing their own flaws. It then occurred to me "*Where is the hope in that?*" I realized then that I had been a self-defeatist operating under the guise of expressing humility.

In brand new sobriety, I do think that being hard on myself was important (I am only speaking from my experience here). It helped me smash all of my old ideas that I had in thinking that I had everything figured out when I clearly didn't even have a clue who I really was. It helped me very much in chipping away at a false ego that I had built up over years of chemical abuse. I thought my inflated ego protected me, and maybe it did, but that ego might've been necessary at the time only because I had invariably placed myself in harm's way every day. But I'm almost 5 years into sobriety now. If I am working or have worked AA's 12 steps, and have found a semblance of spiritual awakening, then wouldn't it make sense that I have a better sense of self-worth by now?

To say that *I am a bad person* is self-pity and could also be seen as self-resentment. To say that I suffer from the human condition and am prone to mistakes is a form of humility. I am constantly reminded that I have always done the best I could with what I had. In some instances I've never strived for change.

Consequently, I held on to all of my defects and suffered (and caused suffering) with that choice. For me, I know that if I decide not to include God in building my character and improving my behavior (steps 6 & 7), then I know that I will remain defective. My daily infraction is when I don't acknowledge a Higher Power as part of my day. It happens more often than I care to admit.

When God is excluded from my life, then I shouldn't really be surprised when I fall into self-remorse and think of myself to be a jerk or a loser. When God is a part of my daily life then I am capable of making human errors and I remember to pray for the courage to change, ask for wisdom on how to proceed, and feel the comfort of serenity in life's terms. I am not perfect, but I constantly try to shoot for progress with my HP.

Ninth Concept

"Service leadership at all levels is indispensable for future functioning and safety. Primary World Service Leadership must necessarily be assumed by its trustees".



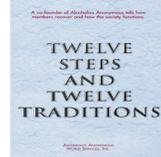
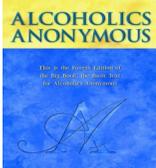
September Focus

Step Nine

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

Ninth Tradition

"Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities."



Our Stories

Altar Boy Turned Bad Boy Turns to AA - and Stays

By: Robbie W.

My name is Robbie and I'm an alcoholic! I was born and raised to believe in God. Twelve years of a Christian School, Mother attended Church every Sunday and brought my Sister and I. Was an Alter Boy and even had some early ideas to be a Preacher. Then at 12 and a half years old I had my first drink. Boonesbury Strawberry Wine!!! I also loved my beer and shots of whiskey! Then some of the guys were smoking pot and I tried that. Loved it while listening to Led Zeppelin - dazed and confused!!! Starting doing qualdes and uppers. Loved snorting "crank." Oh my I was a real garbage head! Was a staple at Keg parties in high school and grew my hair long. Forgot all about God and being a preacher. Fell in love with the effect produced from being drunk and high. Nothing else mattered. Started getting in trouble with the law

after high school, and before long got my first prison bit (6 months in the House of Correction) I was now a bad guy. In and out of rehabs, insane asylums, and living in Philadelphia Parks - sleeping on park benches or parked cars. Hated myself. Stole and boosted for a living. Then one day asked God for help. In fact I cried out, "God Please help me!!!" That was October 31, 1983. Some AA guys in prison told me to look them up when I got out. I did. I still go to AA TODAY - 31 years later. I believe in God and that He/She Loves to help wayward folks like us. My job today is to be of maximum service to My Higher Power and others. I accept that job! Today I am in a great relationship with a beautiful woman in AA. I have a fantastic career, and a family that loves me. Thank you God for creating Alcoholics Anonymous!

Easy does it First things first This to shall pass
Live and let live Keep it simple Keep an open mind
One day at a time Live life on life's terms
 One is too many, a thousand is not enough Be good to yourself!
Just for today I can't, he can, so I think I'll let
Let go and let God Death, insanity, or recovery
 I came to believe **Keep coming back it really works!**
Surrender to become Victorious Today is all you have
Time takes time UNITY, RECOVERY, AND SERVICE
One Day at a time Keep coming back
 RECOVERY AND HOPE



Action after Decision by: Mike J.

After working step eight, you should have a list of people you have harmed and you should be willing to make amends to them all. If so, then you are ready to work step nine. *Step nine should not be undertaken without first consulting your sponsor, therapist, or spiritual advisor.* Period. No exceptions. Do not jump into step nine without the assistance of a mentor who has already been there.

In all likelihood your advisor will ask you to share with him or her your step eight in detail, asking you about your goals in making amends, how you plan to perform your amends, and when you plan to make them. This person, having already worked step nine, understands that timing, courage, and prudence are much more valuable to you at this point than sheer enthusiasm, and he or she can therefore guide you through the process.

For starters, making direct amends is not always a good idea. That is why the second half of step nine reads “except when to do so would injure them or others.” It may be that the harm you have done to someone is so severe that simply seeing you would cause them great consternation, no matter how benevolent your current intentions. In such cases, you should probably not make a direct amends. It may also be that the person is unaware of the harm you have caused, and simply making them aware will cause them significant pain. It is also possible that approaching someone and admitting your behavior could stir up the proverbial hornets’ nest, putting your job or freedom in jeopardy, which might in turn injure your loved ones – especially if you are your family’s primary breadwinner. In such cases, direct amends should only be undertaken after much careful consideration by you and your advisor, plus consul-

tation with anyone else (family members) who might be affected. Sometimes an indirect amends – simply being aware of what you have done and working hard to live differently in the future – is the best that you can do.

Most of the time, however, a direct amends can and should be made. In such instances, your advisor can help to ensure that you are making the right amends for the harm done. Sometimes just admitting your bad behavior and saying, “I’m sorry, and I’m working hard to behave differently in the future,” is sufficient. Other times you may need to repay, or promise to repay, money that is owed (along with the apology and assertion that you are changing your behavior). In all cases an amends is more than just an apology; *the most important part of any amends is the follow-up of not making the same mistakes again.*

Not surprisingly, step nine is among the scariest steps in recovery. The prospect of approaching someone we have wronged, admitting what we’ve done, apologizing and making restitution when appropriate, and then living differently in the future is, at best, daunting. However, making amends is it rarely as difficult as we make it out to be. Nearly everyone is receptive to a genuinely sincere effort. Sometimes people we’ve long held resentments against will actually use the opportunity to make an amends of their own. Usually, at worst, others appreciate the effort we are making to set things right.

In rare instances the people to whom we are making amends are not receptive. They may distrust our motives, they may just be so angry with us that they can’t accept our apology and attempts at restitution, or they may have an emotional or psychological issue that prevents them

from behaving as most others do. This is their prerogative, and it is not a reason for us to deviate from our course. We make our amends anyway. After all, this is our recovery, not theirs.

For many recovering addicts, step nine is a key stride on the road to lasting recovery and a life changed for the better. In fact, this “change for the better” occurs so often that the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* (upon which all 12-step recovery programs are based) lists what are commonly called “The Promises” at the conclusion of step nine. They read:

If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

For many people it is helpful and comforting to do a “Promises” check-in after completing step nine. Nearly always, many or all of the promises have come true to a certain extent. Seeing this tangible proof that the 12 steps really do work is a great incentive for continued sobriety and step-work.

Events and Service Notes

District 17 Corrections

For those looking to jumpstart their involvement in service work, District 17 is in need of help in carrying the message to those in the Corrections system. There are many positions that fall under the heading of Corrections service work—Corrections Correspondence Service, Pre-release Contact Program, and AA meetings on the inside, to name a few. For those interested in getting involved—please contact Steve N. (Area 75 District 17 Corrections Committee Chair) at (262) 939-9676 or nova221sgn@wi.rr.com.

RACO Steering Committee Meetings

The Racine Area Central Office's 'Steering Committee' meets on the first Saturday of every month at RACO. The steering committee invites anyone who may be interested in Area 75 and District 17 events and happenings.

The Steering Committee also currently has a few open positions available (which can be seen on Page 6 of the this edition of The

Reprive). Check it out!

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!

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.

Upcoming Events & Activities

Fridays in September

Young at Heart
 "New Young Peoples Meeting"
 The Benjamin House
 6:00pm

Saturday, Sept. 5.

Game Night
 The Grove Club
 Racine, WI
 8:30pm

Sunday Sept. 13th

Packers vs. Bears game
 The Grove Club
 Racine, WI
 Kickoff - 12:00 noon

Saturday Oct. 3rd

RACO Steering Committee mtg
 Racine Area Central Office
 Racine, WI
 9:30am

Saturday Oct. 31st

Halloween Dance (w/ DJ Josh)
 The Grove Club
 8:30pm

Event to share? Email - raconewsletter@gmail.com!



Racine Area Central Office FINANCIALS

Donation Detail	Aug
Anonymous donations	14.55
Alano Racine Friday Night Candlelight	20.00
Alano Women in AA	40.00
Benjamin House A Day in the Country	17.05
Benjamin House - People, Places & Things	32.00
Benjamin House, 10:00 a.m. Sun. Dwnstrs	9.00
Benjamin House, 6PM Monday, 12x12	26.00
Benjamin House Tuesday 6PM AA/Alanon	10.00
Benjamin House Thursday 6PM Big Book	13.00
Benjamin House Friday 6:00pm Young At Heart	12.00
Benjamin House Saturday 7AM Cellar Dwellers	8.00
Benjamin House Saturday 10AM Big Book	40.00
Covenant 9:30AM Tuesday Fresh Start	80.00
Grove Wed 4:30 p.m.	75.00
Kenosha Happier Hour	140.00
Racine Transitional Care	50.00
RACO, 12:15 p.m. Mon-Sat.	100.00

The Seventh Tradition states:

***Every A. A. group ought to be fully
self-supporting,
declining outside contributions...***



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 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	Roxann D.
Co-Chairperson	VACANT
Secretary	Courtney K.
Co-Secretary	VACANT
Treasurer	Pam L.
Co-Treasurer	Jessica H.
Staffing Coordinator	John B.
Co-Staffing Coordinator	Bruce P.
Newsletter	Kevin B.
Co-Newsletter	VACANT
Hotline Chairperson	Mark S.
Co-Hotline Chairperson	Jon K.
Literature Chairperson	Rachel S.
Co-Literature Chair	Deb K.
Procurement	Steve K.
Webmaster	Courtney L.
Co-Webmaster	Brian K.
Advisor	Darrel S.

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Racine, WI 53403

(262) 554-6611

24-Hour Hotline: (262) 554-7788

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